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THE

BRITISH ESSAYISTS;

TO WHICH ARE PREFIXED

PREFACES

BIOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL, AND CRITICAL:

By JAMES FERGUSON, Esq.

Author of the NEW BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY, &c.

A New Edition, in Forty-five Volumes.

VOL. XXXVI.

CONTAINING LOUNGER, VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed by J. Haddon, Tabernacle Walk,

FOR G. OFFER; J. SHARPE AND SONS: ROBINSONS AND CO.; G. WALKER: J. EVANS AND SONS; R. DOESON; J. JONES; AND J. JOHNSON; ALSO W. STEWART AND CO.; AND W. BLAIR, EDINBURGH; AND J. SAWERS, GLASGOW.

1819.

LOUNGER.

N° 1—51.

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own thoughts renders independent of vulgar society, and the vigour and variety of whose imagination free from the necessity of resorting to frivolous or censurable amusements. Among the first sort, the transition is easy from the yawn of inanity to the roar of riot and intemperance; but persons of the latter description, idle in conduct, but of active minds, as they seldom experience the uneasiness of the one, seldom incur the blame of the other.

As far as the freedom from dissipation extends, the writer of the present Paper thinks he may lay claim to the last of those characters. It were needless, and indeed improper, to trouble his readers with the history of those incidents in his life which have thrown him out of the number of the professionally busy; some untoward circumstances in point of fortune, and some feelings, perhaps blameable from their nicety, drew him at an early period of life, out from among the bustle of mankind; but without the misanthropy that arises from disgust, or the despondency that is sometimes the consequence of disappointment.

Those incidents, however, did not abridge, but perhaps rather increased, the extent of his society. Within the pale of a particular profession, a man's companions and associates are chiefly limited to some particular class with which that profession is connected. But he who is an idler without unsocial dispositions finds occasional companions in all characters and professions, who are neither estranged from him by the jealousy of rivalship, nor kept at a distance by the opposite nature of their pursuits and occupations.

The busy, it must be owned, are apt to treat such a man with more kindness than deference. This it was not long before I experienced: but of a temper not easily offended, I only smiled at perceiving it; and it rather soothed my indolence, than provoked

my spleen, when I found that I had acquired a denomination more innocent than respectable. I was called a *Lounger* by all my acquaintance, and much the greater part of my friends agreed to the appellation. If at any time I felt the undignified sound of the name, yet I took credit with myself, on the other hand, for not deserving it. It flattered a secret pride to be somewhat more than the world thought me.

Of generic names, indeed, people are not always very scrupulous in the application, and therefore I could easily pardon those who ranked me under the class of men which the title of *Lounger* distinguishes. He whose walks are pointed neither to the resorts of the merchant, the lawyer, the soldier, or the churchman, it may fairly be supposed has no motive for them at all; and the first of any of those professions who crosses him in his way, will accuse him of being a *Lounger*. He will still more seem to deserve that name, if he frequents their places of meeting without having any business congenial to those places.

The same superiority will be assumed by the professedly idle, as by the professionally busy. In the haunts of amusement and of pleasure, the man who does not warmly worship the deity of the place, will be accounted a supernumerary by his votaries. At balls and card-parties I have as frequently heard myself called a *Lounger*, as on Change or in Courts of Law.

Abroad, for I was prevailed on by a friend to accompany him for some time on his travels, I was not just called a *Lounger*, the French and Italian languages not possessing an exactly synonimous term, and those which approach nearest to it not being respectful enough to be applied to a stranger. Both nations indeed are idle with so much activity, and contrive to do nothing, and to say nothing, with so much interest in their looks, and so much movement

in their gestures, that it is no wonder the word should not find a place in their vocabulary: but they too marked some traces of my character; though, as is their custom, they tacked a compliment to their draught of it. 'Monsieur,' said the Abbé ——, at a petit souper of Madame de V——'s, at Paris, '*Monsieur est quelquefois Rêveur, mais toujours interessant, toujours aimable!*'

On all those occasions, however, I was not quite so idle as those around me imagined. Like Alfred in the Danish camp, I harped for them, but observed for myself; and, like him too, enjoyed my observation the more that it was secret and unsuspected. If this resemblance should convey some idea of treachery, of advantage over those with whom I associated, let it be known, at least, that in the use of it I was perfectly inoffensive. The Lounger is one of the best natured characters in the world, even in the sense which I allow the term to apply to myself. 'Tis the player who frets, and scolds, and is angry: the looker-on sees more errors in the play; but he applies them only to the theory of the game, and thinks but little of the party who commits them.

As a Lounger, I had from my earliest age been fond of books, and sometimes ventured to write when I was tired of reading. A Lounger of the sort I could wish to be thought, is one who, even amidst a certain intercourse with mankind, preserves a constant intimacy with himself; it is not therefore to be wondered at, if he should sometimes, if I may be allowed the expression, correspond with himself, and write down, if he can write at all, what he wishes this favourite companion more particularly to remark. Exactly of this sort are the notes and memoradums I have sometimes been tempted to make: transcripts of what I have felt or thought, or little records of what I have heard or read, set down without any

other arrangement than what the disposition of the time might prompt. These little papers formed a kind of new society, which I could command at any time, without stirring from my fire-side. It was, of all sorts of company, the most fitted for a Lounger; company in which he could be unaccommodating without offence, and inattentive without incivility.

The idea of giving those trifles to the world in the form of periodical essays, is an effect beyond the usual force of my character. Unknown, however, as a Man, and new as an Author, the *Lounger* risks but little either in censure or in praise. There is a censure, indeed, and a suffrage, which no man can escape, to which one of his disposition is peculiarly liable, I mean that of his own mind. He trusts his publication will be such as to risk nothing on this ground; it is the only promise which he will venture on its behalf. It may be gay without wit, and grave without depth, when its author is disposed to gaicty or to thought; but while it endeavours to afford some little amusement by the one, or some little instruction by the other, it will at least be harmless in both.

Z

N° 2. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1785.

THE precepts of the Moralist and Philosopher are generally directed to guide their disciples in the great and important concerns of life, to incite to the practice of cardinal virtues, and to deter from the commission of enormous crimes: The advices of wisdom and experience point out the road to success and to

honour in stations of public consequence, or in nice and important circumstances of private duty.

In the earlier periods of society, a very simple code of morality and of rectitude was all that was necessary. To controul the violence of the stronger passions, to prescribe the rules of distributive justice, and to inculcate the duties of active humanity, was the proper and essential province of the instructor, as well as of the legislator. At first, indeed, these two characters would be nearly the same; legislation embracing all that was required of morality, and morality having no range beyond that of the laws. And even when man advanced to a certain point, where the doctrine of morals went beyond the legal rules of conduct; yet that would contain incentives to the exertion only of principal and leading virtues, in certain modes and situations, which the law could not foresee, and for which it could not provide.

In a state of society so advanced as ours (for it is needless to trouble my reader with the intermediate gradations), every one will see the necessity of a nicer and more refined system of morality. The family of the social virtues, like the genealogical tree of an extensive ancestry, spreads with the advancing cultivation of mankind, till it is branched out into a numerous list of collateral duties, many of which it needs an acute discernment to trace up to their source; and some acknowledge their connection, without being able to unravel their pedigree.

The study of those lesser branches of duty and of excellence is called the science of Manners; but our language has no word to distinguish the teacher of it. As Moralist is applied to the teacher of the more important obligations, so Mannerist should have been the denomination of him who inculcates the lesser, had not that word been already appropriated to a very different meaning.

But however the professors of the art may be distinguished, its importance will not be denied. It is seldom that in more essential points of duty men of a certain class are deficient. In most particulars the obligations of morality are aided by the ties of honour, and the fear of punishment enforced by the dread of shame. But in the smaller offices of social life, men may be wanting in their duty, without incuring either punishment or obloquy. The decalogue (if the phrase may be allowed) of manners, the laws of civility, of gentleness, of taste, and of feeling, are not precisely set down, and cannot easily be punished in the breach, or rewarded in the observance: And yet their observance forms, amidst the refinements of modern society, an important part of our own happiness, and of that regard we owe to the happiness of others. To practise them is somewhat difficult; to teach them is still more so: Yet 'tis an art which, though difficult, does not always obtain the honours of difficulty. The pictures which it exhibits must be drawn in those middle tints which it requires a nice pencil to hit; and yet when attained they acquire but a small portion of that applause which stronger colouring and deeper shades are calculated to procure. It is not easy to define that right which our neighbour possesses to general complacency, or to little attentions; nor to mark with precision that injury we do, those wounds we inflict, by a contrary behaviour; and yet the favour in the first, and the wrong in the latter case, is often as strongly felt as in the serious exertions of kindness or malevolence. I have known a friend acquired for life by a trifling civility in a crowded theatre; and a lasting enmity created by a boisterous laugh, or a mutilated bow.

Amidst weighty business indeed, and momentous concerns, such things do not easily find place. But

the number of those who are within their reach more than compensates for the consequence of the few who are beyond it. 'Tis but a very small proportion of men who can move in the sphere of government or of greatness; but scarce any body is exempted from performing a part in the relations of ordinary life. Even of the first class, the reward they hope for their labours consists often in the opportunity of coming down with advantage to the region of the latter; like the hero of a pageant, who looks forward to the hour when he shall undo his trappings, and enjoy, in his plain apparel, the tale of the day at his family fire-side.

A periodical paper, though it may sometimes lift its voice against a neglect of the greater moralities, yet has for its peculiar province the correction and reform of any breach of the lesser. For that purpose it is perhaps better calculated than more laboured and more extended compositions, from its diurnal or weekly appearance. The greater virtues are always the same; but many of the lesser duties of social intercourse receive much of their complexion from the daily fluctuating circumstances of custom and of fashion. But the creed of Custom is not always that of Right; and it is the privilege of such a work, as well as one of its chief uses, to attack the entrenchments of Fashion, whenever she is at war with Modesty or Virtue.

Of this study of Manners the Lounger had early discovered the use and the necessity. He who seldom quits the walk of a particular science or occupation, has a determined object in his view, the pursuit of which leaves little time for scattering attentions around him, and always affords some apology for the neglect of them. But for such neglect the man of no profession cannot so easily be excused, who has neither the hurry of business to occupy his time, nor

its embarrassments to distract his thought. It is not, however, by the etiquette of a court, or the ceremonial of a drawing room, that this virtue is to be regulated. Genuine excellence here, as every where else, springs from nature, and is to be cultivated only, not created, by artificial instruction. There is more complacency in the negligence of some men, than in what is called the good breeding of others; and the little absences of the heart are often more interesting and engaging than the punctilious attention of a thousand professed sacrificers to the Graces.

Idleness, or that species of little occupations which is attached to no particular business or profession, is a state more difficult to support than is generally imagined. Even the perfect idler, like some other harmless and insignificant animals whom naturalists are acquainted with, though he can live on air, cannot subsist *in vacuo:* And the Idler of a higher sort needs perhaps more ideas, more store of mind about him, than would go to the furnishing of twenty brains of mere plodding men of business.

The Lounger feels for the family of the idle in all its branches, however distant their relation to that of which he owns himself descended. To them, therefore, his lucubrations will in a particular manner be adapted. To those in whom the want of active employment has not relaxed the power of thought, they may afford some opportunity for speculation; and even to that prodigal of mind as well as time, who has forgotten how to think, the few moments required for the perusal of them, will be at least a small portion of life harmlessly spent, and, it may be, saved from less innocent employments.

V

N° 3. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1785.

Quid nefert quantum habeas? multo illud plus est quod non habes. SEN.

It is an old and a common observation, that men are more desirous to be thought to possess talents and qualities to which in truth they have no pretensions, than those in which they excel in an eminent degree. Of this Cicero was in ancient times a remarkable example; and the observation of every one must have furnished instances as striking in our own days. We see grave and profound statesmen wishing to pass for fine gentlemen, and fine gentlemen valuing themselves upon their knowledge of things of which they are most ignorant. If you wish to compliment the gay, the elegant Lothario, you must not mention his taste in dress, his fine figure, or the lively elegance of his conversation: you must dwell upon his knowledge of the interests of the different states of Europe, his extensive political information, and his talents for business. Camillus is a barrister of the first eminence, possessed of great knowledge in his profession, an acute reasoner, and a powerful pleader. In external appearance nature has been less bountiful to Camillus: his figure is mean and ungraceful; and from his air and manner a stranger would be apt to take him for any thing rather than a gentleman. With all this, Camillus fancies that there is an uncommon degree of elegance in his form, and cannot conceal his ambition to be considered as a man of fashion.

But the most amusing instance of this sort I have met with was that of the late Duke of ——. His Grace was undoubtedly possessed of sound judgment, a cultivated understanding, a greater portion of knowledge than usually falls to the share of those of his rank; and though not perhaps calculated to make a brilliant figure in the senate, his talents were admirably adapted for business, and must in any age have entitled their possessor to respect and consideration. Amidst his other studies, the Duke had happened to look into some books of physic; from that moment he commenced a most skilful physician, and, compared to himself, considered the whole faculty as a set of ignorant blunderers. An artful courtier, well acquainted with this whimsey of his Grace's, contrived to let it be known, that he was affected with a particular disorder; in the cure of which the Duke thought himself more than commonly expert. He kindly offered his assistance, which was received with becoming gratitude; and from time to time he was acquainted with the progress of the cure, and the effects of the medicine supposed to have been administered in consequence of his prescriptions. At the end of six weeks, the wily patient had to thank his noble physician, both for a complete cure, and a considerable employment which he had long in vain solicited.

Among the other sex, though, from their situation, and the narrow circle of their acquirements, this weakness has less room to display itself, yet it is not unfrequently to be found. Elizabeth might be quoted as a counterpart to Cicero, were it not that the claim to beauty is so natural to a woman, that we do not wonder when we find even a Queen not superior to that pretension. But there are, in our own times, ladies who forget the certain empire of their beauty, and aspire to the doubtful reputation of

knowledge. Mirtilla has of late turned her fine eyes from terrestrial objects to the study of astronomy; and you cannot flatter her so much as by asking her opinion of the last new meteor, or the Georgium Sidus. And Euanthe, since she read Reaumur, has left her society of beaux for a curious collection of butterflies.

But while people are thus ambitious of being thought to possess talents and qualities to which they have no pretension, it does not thence follow, that they estimate at too low a rate those attainments in which they are allowed to excel. In judging at least of those around us, we are, I am afraid, too apt to undervalue such as may be deficient in any particular in which we have acquired eminence, however respectable such persons may otherwise be. The man of letters looks down with a conscious superiority on the man of business engaged in the ordinary affairs of life: The men of the world, on the other hand, feeling the importance of their own occupations, consider the pursuits of literature as at best but a finer species of dissipation, a mere pastime, leading to no end, and attended with no consequence.

This sort of mutual contempt is visible in every rank and condition of life; and even the best, the most moderate, and the most cultivated minds, are not, perhaps, altogether exempted from it. Mr. Hume, in his History of England, expresses himself in the following terms; 'Such a superiority do the pursuits of literature possess above every other occupation, that even he who obtains but a mediocrity in them, merits the pre-eminence above those that excel the most in the common and vulgar professions.' It is not my object at present to inquire how far this opinion be well or ill founded: Allowing it to be just, what must Mr. Hume's station be in the scale of excellence? That question, I am per-

suaded, his gentle modesty hardly permitted him to consider. It is well known that Mr. Hume, a few years before his death, received a pension of 200l. a year. It might have been amusing at the time, to consider the opposite ideas entertained by the givers and the receiver of that pension. In the pride of present power, and amidst the self-importance fostered by perpetual adulation, the minister and his minions might view with a certain degree of contempt a man on whom they were bestowing so paltry a recompence: On the other hand, the author, while receiving this mark of favour, and expressing his gratitude for it, might not be able to check the rising thought, that his name would live for ever, ranked with those whose envied lot it had been, to inform, to enlighten, to delight mankind; while his patrons, distinguished only by rank or station, were buried in oblivion with the common herd of kings, ministers and statesmen, whose names posterity reads with the most perfect indifference, of whom little more is commonly known, than that they lived and died at such and such a period. Of this idea, Mr. Hume himself gives a fine illustration. Talking of the little regard paid to Milton when alive, 'Whatlocke,' says he, 'mentions one Milton, as he calls him, a blind man, who was employed in traslating a treaty with Sweden into Latin. These forms of expression are amusing to us, who consider how obscure Whitlocke himself, though Lord Keeper and Ambassador, and indeed a man of great abilities and merit, has become in comparison of Milton.'

When Lord Keeper Whitlocke expressed himself in those terms, he must have felt a conscious superiority over one Milton, employed to translate the Swedish treaty into Latin. But if we may guess at what passed in the mind of Milton while employed in that humble service, it is not improbable, that if

ever he was led to estimate his own merit in comparison with that of Whitlocke, a just sense of his own superior excellence might teach him, that, though constrained by situation to submit to a drudgery so unworthy of him, yet still he was by nature entitled to a place in the temple of Fame far above his employer; and he might perhaps enjoy, by a sort of anticipation, that ample justice which posterity has done him. Such examples may convey a useful lesson to the great, may teach them to smooth somewhat of their 'crested pride,' and to treat with more observance and regard than they are often disposed to do, men equal to them by nature, perhaps superior in Nature's best and choicest gifts.

Of the last species of weakness taken notice of in this paper, the credit we take for the talents we possess, the reason seems obvious enough, that partiality to ourselves, and our own possessions, which runs through every circumstance of life. Of the first, our desire to be remarked for talents to which we have no proper claim, the reason may, I think, be drawn from the period of life at which it commonly takes its rise. Our real endowments were ours, or began to be attained, at an early age, when we were but little liable to the impressions of vanity or self-conceit; but the new and imperfect acquirements on which men are apt very absurdly to plume themselves, begin after the habit of vanity is formed, which appropriates to itself every acquisition, however trifling, which its possessor may happen to make.

But whatever may be the cause of such weaknesses, no doubt will be entertained of their existence. It will readily be acknowledged, that men are apt to fall into those two opposite and seemingly contradictory extremes, when they think of themselves and of others. On one hand, the childish vanity of new acquirements leads us to overlook those talents which

in reality we possess, and to value ourselves on those to which we have little or no pretensions; yet when we come to form a judgment of our own merit, in comparison with that of our neighbours, we are apt to despise every person who is deficient in any one particular in which we excel. We ought, however, to recollect, that to aim at universal excellence is a vain and fruitless attempt, which seldom fails to expose even men of the most superior talents to deserved ridicule: And, if this be allowed, it must follow, that it is no less unjust than ungenerous, to despise others for the want of a particular quality or accomplishment which we may happen to possess; because it is extremely probable that we may be equally deficient in some article, perhaps more important and more useful to mankind, in which they have attained a high degree of excellence.

R

N° 4. SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 1785.

Laudator temporis acti. JUVENAL.

'GET thee a place, for I must be idle,' says Hamlet to Horatio at the play. It is often so with with me at public places: I am more employed in attending to the spectators than to the entertainment; a practice which, in the present state of some of our entertainments, I frequently find very convenient. In me, however, it is an indolent, quiet sort of indulgence, which, if it affords some amusement to myself, does not disturb that of any other body.

At an assembly at which I happened to be present

a few nights ago, my notice was peculiarly attracted by a gentleman with what is called a fresh look for his age, dressed in a claret-coloured coat, with gold buttons, of a cut not altogether modern, an embroidered waistcoat with very large flaps, a major wig, long ruffles nicely plaited (that looked however as if the fashion had come to them rather than that they had been made for the fashion); his white silk stockings ornamented with figured clocks, and his shoes with high insteps, buckled with small round gold buckles. His sword, with a silver hilt somewhat tarnished, I might have thought only an article of his dress, had not a cockade in his hat marked him for a military man. It was some time before I was able to find out who he was, till at last my friend Mr. S——informed me he was a very worthy relation of his, who had not been in town above twice these forty years; that an accidental piece of business had lately brought him from his house in the country, and he had been prevailed on to look on the ladies of Edinburgh at two or three public places before he went home again, that he might see whether they were as handsome as their mothers and grandmothers, whom he had danced with at balls, and squired to plays and concerts, near half a century ago. 'He was,' continued my friend, 'a professed admirer and votary of the sex; and when he was a young man fought three duels for the honour of the ladies, in one of which he was run through the body, but luckily escaped with his life. The lady, however, for whom he fought, did not reward her knight as she ought to have done, but soon after married another man with a larger fortune; upon which he forswore society in a great measure, and though he continued for several years to do his duty in the army, and actually rose to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, mixed but little in the world, and

has for a long space of time resided at his estate a determined batchelor, with somewhat of misanthropy, and a great deal of good nature about him. If you please I will introduce you to him—Colonel Caustic, this is a very particular friend of mine, who solicits, the honour of being known to you.'——The Colonel kissed me on both cheeks, and seeming to take a liking to my face, we appeared mutually disposed to be very soon acquainted.

Our conversation naturally began on the assembly, which I observed to be a full one. 'Why, yes,' said the Colonel, 'here is crowd enough, and to spare; and yet your ladies seem to have been at a loss for partners. I suppose the greatest part of the men, or rather boys, whom I see now standing up to dance, have been brought in to make up a set, as people in the country sometimes fill up the places in a dance with chairs, to help them to go through the figure. But as I came too late for the minuets, I presume the dressed gentlemen walked up stairs after they were ended.'—'Why, Sir, there are now-a-days no minuets.'—'No minuets!—(looking for a while at the company on the floor)—I don't wonder at it.'—'Why, perhaps, Colonel,' said I, "these young gentlemen have not quite an aspect serious enough for the *pas grave;* and yet yonder is one standing with his back to the fire.'—'Why, yes, there is something of gravity, of almost melancholy on his face.'—'Yes, melancholy and gentleman-like,' said I, 'as Master Stephen in the play has it.'—'Why, that young man, Sir,—now that I have observed him closer,—with that roll of handkerchief about his neck, his square-cut striped vest, his large metal buttons and nankeen breeches,—Why, Sir, 'tis a stable boy out of place!'

'Pray, who are those gentlemen,' said Colonel Caustic, 'who have ranged themselves in a sort of

phalanx at the other end of the room, and seem, like the devil in Milton, to carry stern defiance on their brow?'—'I have not the honour of their acquaintance,' I replied; 'but some of them I presume from the cockades in their hats'—'You do not say so,' interrupted the Colonel. 'Is that the military air of the present day? But you must be mistaken; they cannot be real soldiers: militia, or train-band subalterns, believe me, who having neither seen service nor good company, contrive to look fierce, in order to avoid looking sheepish. I remember indeed of old, some of our boys used to put on that fierce air in coffee-houses and taverns; but they could never dream of wearing it before the ladies.'—'I think, however,' said Mr. S——, smiling, 'the ladies don't seem much afraid of them.'—'Why, your ladies,' answered the Colonel, 'to say truth, have learned to look people in the face. During the little while I have been in town, I have met with some in my walks, in great coats, riding hats, and rattans, whom I could not shew an eye to: but I am newly come from the country; I shall keep a better countenance by and by.'

At that moment a lady and her party, for whose appearance the dancers were waiting, were just entering the room, and seemed in a great hurry to get forward. Their progress, however, was a good deal impeded by a tall stout young man, who had taken his station just at the threshold, and leaning his back against one of the door posts, with his right foot placed firm on the end of the bench, was picking his teeth with a perfect *nonchalance* to every thing around him. I saw the Colonel fasten a very angry look on him, and move his hand with a sort of involuntary motion towards my cane. The ladies had now got through the defile, and we stood back to make way for them. 'Was there ever such a

brute?' said Colonel Caustic. The young gentleman stalked up to the place where we were standing, put up his glass to his eye, looked hard at the Colonel, and then—put it down again. The Colonel took snuff.

'Our sex,' said I, 'Colonel, is not perhaps improved in its public appearance; but I think you will own the other is not less beautiful than it was.' He cast his eye round for a few minutes before he answered me. 'Why, yes,' said he, 'Sir, here are many pretty, very pretty girls. That young lady in blue is a very pretty girl. I remember her grandmother at the same age; she was a fine woman.'—'But the one next her, with the fanciful cap, and the *panache* of red and white feathers, with that elegant form, that striking figure, is not she a fine woman?'—'Why, no, Sir, not quite a fine woman; not quite such a woman, as a man (raising his chest as he pronounced the word man, and pressing the points of his three unemployed fingers gently on his bosom), as a man would be proud to stake his life for.'

'But in short, Sir,' continued he,—'I speak to you because you look like one that can understand me—There is nothing about a woman's person merely (were she formed like the *Venus de Medicis*), that can constitute a fine woman. There is something in the look, the manner, the voice, and still more the silence, of such a one as I mean, that has no connection with any thing material; at least no more than just to make one think such a soul is lodged as it deserves.—In short, Sir, a fine woman,—I could have shewn you some examples formerly.—I mean, however, no disparagement to the young ladies here; none, upon my honour; they are as well made, and if not better dressed, at least more dressed than their predecessors; and their complexions I

think are better. But I am an old fellow, and apt to talk foolishly.'

'I suspect, Caustic,' said my friend, Mr. S——, 'you and I are not quite competent judges of this matter. Were the partners of our dancing days to make their appearance here, with their humble foretops and brown unpowdered ringlets'—'Why, what then, Mr. S——?'—''Why, I think those high heads would overtop them a little, that's all.'—'Why, as for the *panache*,' replied the Colonel, 'I have no objection to the ornament itself; there is something in the waving movement of it that is graceful, and not undignified; but in every sort of dress there is a certain character, a certain relation which it holds to the wearer. Yonder now, you'll forgive me, Sir, (turning to me,) yonder is a set of girls, I suppose, from their looks and from their giggling, but a few weeks from the nursery, whose feathers are in such agitation, whisked about, high and low, on this side and on that.'—'Why, Sir, 'tis like the Countess of Cassowar's managerie scared by the entrance of her lap-dog.'

'As to dress, indeed, in general,' continued the Colonel, 'that of a man or woman of fashion should be such as to mark some attention to appearance, some deference to society. The young men I see here, look as if they had just had time to throw off their boots after a fox-chase. But yet dress is only an accessory, that should seem to belong to the wearer, and not the wearer to it. Some of the young ladies opposite to us are so made up of ornaments, so stuck round with finery, that an ill-natured observer might say, their milliner had sent them hither, as she places her doll in her shop-window, to exhibit her wares to the company.'

Mr. S——was going to reply, when he was stopped by the noise of a hundred tongues, which ap-

proached like a gathering storm from the card-room. 'Twas my Lady Rumpus, with a crowd of women and a mob of men in her suite. They were people of too much consequence to have any of that deference for Society which the Colonel talked of. My nerves, and those of my friend S——, though not remarkably weak, could barely stand their approach; but Colonel Caustic's were quite overpowered.—We accompanied him in his retreat out of the dancing-room; and after drinking a dish of tea, by way of sedative, as the physicians phrase it, he called for his chair, and went home.

While we are sitting in the tea-room, Mr. S—— undertook the apology of my Lady Rumpus and her followers. 'We must make allowance,' said he, 'for the fashion of the times. In these days, precision of manners is exploded, and ease is the mode.' —'Ease!' said the Colonel, wiping his forehead. 'Why, in your days,' said Mr. S——, 'and I may say in mine too, for I believe there is not much betwixt us, were there not sometimes fantastic modes, which people of rank had brought into use, and which were called genteel because such people practised them, though the word might not justly apply to them in the abstract?'—'I understood you, S——,' said the Colonel, 'there were such things; some irregularities that broke out now and then. There were mad caps of both sexes, that would venture on strange things; but they were in a style somewhat above the canaille: ridiculous enough, I grant you, but not perfectly absurd: coarse it might be, but not downright vulgar. In all ages, I suppose, people of condition did sometimes entrench themselves behind their titles or their high birth, and committed offences against what lesser folks would call decorum, and yet were allowed to be well-bred all the while; were sometimes a little gross,

and called it witty; and a little rude, and called it raillery: but 'twas false coinage, and never passed long. Indeed, I have generally remarked, that people did so only because they could not do better; 'tis like pleading privilege for a debt which a man's own funds do not enable him to pay. A great man may perhaps be well-bred in a manner which little people do not understand; but, trust me, he is a greater man who is well bred in a manner that every body understands.'

Z

N° 5. SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 1785.

Historiæ decus est, et quasi anima, ut cum eventis causæ copulentur. BACON, De Augm. Scient.

Of the various kinds of literary composition there is hardly any which has been at all times more cultivated than that of History. A desire to recount remarkable events, and a curiosity to hear the relation of them, are propensities inherent in human nature; and hence historians have abounded in every age, in the rudest and simplest, as well as in the most polished and refined. The first poets were historians; and Homer and Ossian, 'when the light of the song arose,' but recounted the virtues and exploits of their countrymen.

From poetic numbers, History at length descended to prose; but she was still of the family of the Muses, and long retained many features of the race from whence she sprung. *Historia*, says Quintilian, *est proxima poetis, et quodammodo carmen solutum.* She professed, indeed, that her purpose was to instruct,

not less than to please; yet such was her hereditary propensity, that for many successive ages she continued more studious to cultivate the means of pleasing than anxious to gather the materials of instruction. But when all her arts of pleasing had been exhausted; when the charms of novelty and the blossom of youth were gone, she began to feel the decay of her power. In her distress she looked around for aid, and wisely embraced an union with PHILOSOPHY, who taught her the value of the rich field of instruction she had so long neglected, shewed her how she might add new graces to her powers of giving delight, how she might not only recover, but extend her empire, and be crowned with honours that should never fade.

To drop the allegory: The truth is, that although to afford pleasure and to convey instruction have been ever the professed ends of history, yet they have not always been mingled in due proportion. The former has been the object of the greater part of historians; and their aim of instruction has seldom gone farther than to illustrate some moral precept, and to improve the heart by exhibiting bright and illustrious examples of virtue. It is of late only that History, by taking a wider range, has assumed a different form; and with the relation of splendid events uniting an investigation of their causes, has exhibited a view of those great circumstances in the situation of any people, which can alone yield solid instruction.

Historians may therefore be divided into two kinds, according to the methods they have followed, and the ends they have chiefly had in view in their composition. The *first* class, and which is by far the most numerous, consists of those who have confined themselves to the mere relation of public transactions; who have made it their principal aim to in-

terest the affections; and who, in assigning any causes of events, have seldom gone beyond those immediately connected with the particular characters of the persons whose actions they describe. The *second* class comprehends the very few historians who have viewed it as their chief business to unfold the more remote and general causes of public events, and have considered the giving an account of the rise, progress, perfection, and decline of government, of manners, of art, and of science, as the only true means of rendering History instructive.

In the former of these classes we must rank almost all the celebrated historians of ancient Greece and Rome. In general they merely relate distinguished events; but to search out and reflect upon the general causes of them they seldom attempt; and to mark the state of government, of laws, of manners, or of arts, seems not to have been thought of by them as falling within the province of history. To delight the imagination seems to have been their favourite aim; and accordingly, from the superior effects of recent events in interesting the passions, we find that many of the most distinguished historians of this class, have chosen for their subjects, either transactions of which they were themselves witnesses, or that were very near their own times. Thucydides and Xenophon record little but the events of their own day, and in which they themselves bore a part; Cæsar gives us nothing but memoirs of his own exploits; and Tacitus confines himself very nearly to his own times. Even Herodotus, who takes a larger range, is, in general, only a relator of facts which he either saw himself, or reports on the testimony of others; and Livy, who commences his history with the foundation of Rome, scarce thinks of any thing beyond a mere detail of wars and revolutions.

and seems only careful to embellish his story by interesting narrative and flowing language.

When such were the limited bounds of this species of writing, history was an ART, the design of which was to please; not a SCIENCE, the purpose of which was to instruct. It was, as Quintilian says, *proxima poetis;* and critical rules were laid down for its composition, similar to those for the structure of an epic poem. To select a subject, the recital of which might be interesting; to arrange and distribute the several parts with skill; to embellish by forcible and picturesque description; to enliven by characteristic and animated speeches, and to clothe the whole in beautiful and flowing language; formed all the necessary and essential parts of the composition. In these the ancients held the highest excellence and perfection of history to consist; and so little did their views reach any farther, that Dionysius of Halicarnassus, a critic of taste and acuteness says, that the first object of a person about to write History ought to be, 'to select a subject striking and pleasing, and such as may not only affect, but overpower the minds of the readers with pleasure.' And he condemns Thucydides for his choice of the Peloponnesian war; 'because it was neither honourable nor prosperous, nor ever should have been engaged in, or at least should have been buried in silence and oblivion, that posterity might be ignorant of it.'

Thus confirmed were the ideas of the ancients with regard to the objects of history. But while we may regret this, we are not to ascribe it to any defect of genius: it arose from causes which a little reflection may render sufficiently obvious, and from the circumstances in which they were unavoidably placed.

In ancient times, mankind had before their eyes but a very limited field of observation, and but a short experience of the revolutions of nations. Their

memorials of former events too were scanty and imperfect, being little more than traditions, involved in uncertainty and disfigured by fable. They possessed not that extensive experience, nor that large collection of facts, which can alone lead to general reasonings, or can suggest, the idea of Philosophical History. Nothing farther could occur to them as the object of history, but to delight the imagination and improve the heart; and accordingly they chose subjects that made the strongest impression on their own minds, and might most interest the passions of others. To explain the immediate motives and springs of actions, was necessary even for connecting their narrative; but to proceed farther and trace the remote causes, and to perceive how much public events were affected by the degree of advancement, which a nation had reached in government, in manners, and in arts, were discoveries yet hid from their view.

The ancient world wanted that communication and intercourse of one nation with another, which, of all circumstances, has the greatest effect in generalizing and enlarging the views of an historian. It is with nations as with individuals; no family knowledge, no domestic study, can ever afford that large and extended information which mixing with other men, which commerce with the world will bestow. In the time of the Grecian republics, man consisted but of two divisions, Greeks and Barbarians; though the subdivision of the former into smaller states promoted the spirit of philosophic research considerably more than when to the name of Roman was confined every science, every art, every privilege and dignity of man. In modern times, the nearly equal rank and cultivation of different European kingdoms, gives much more opportunity than was enjoyed by the ancient world, for the comparison of facts, and

the construction of system in the history of mankind; while at the same time the literary intercourse of those different kingdoms gives to such researches at once the force of union and the spur of emulation.

In short, the opposite situation and circumstances of the present age have bestowed on history its most signal improvement, and have given it a form before unknown. The many and various revolutions which an experience of more than three thousand years has exhibited to mankind, and the contemplation of the rise, progress, and decline of successive empires, have led to the discovery, that all human events are guided and directed by certain general causes which must be every where the same. It has come to be perceived that nations, like individuals, have their infancy, maturity, decline, and extinction; and that in their gradual establishment and various revolutions, immediate causes springing from the actions and characters of individuals, and even all the wisdom and foresight of man have had but a very slender share, in comparison of the influence of general and unavoidable circumstances.

These reflections, which the experience of many ages could alone suggest, and to which the great improvements of the present age in reasoning and philosophy have much contributed, have led men to view the history of nations in a new light. To investigate the general causes and the true sources of the advancement, the prosperity, and the fall of empires, has become the useful and important object of the historian. While he relates the memorable transactions of each different period, and describes the conduct and characters of the persons principally engaged in them, he at the same time unfolds the remote as well as immediate causes of events, and imparts the most valuable knowledge and information.

He marks the advancement of mankind in society, the rise and progress of arts and sciencies, the successive improvements of law and government, and the gradual refinement of manners; all of them not only curious objects of contemplation, but intimately connected with a narration of civil transactions, and without which the events of no particular period can be fully accounted for.

The few who have treated history in this manner form the *second* of the two classes into which I have divided historians; and it is to the present age we owe this union of Philosophy with History, and the production of a new and more perfect species of historical composition. President Montesquieu was perhaps the first who attempted to shew how much the history of mankind may be explained from great and general causes. Mr. de Voltaire's Essay on General History, with all its imperfections, is a work of uncommon merit; and with the usual vivacity of its author, it unites great and enlarged views on the general progress of civilization and advancement of society. The same track has been pursued by other writers of reputation, particularly by the late Mr. Hume, who in his History of England has gone farther in investigating general causes, and in marking the progress of laws, government, arts, and manners, than any of his predecessors. Much, however, yet remains to be done; for it is a field but just begun to be cultivated; and if it be true, as the last-mentioned historian has observed, that the world is still too young to fix many general truths in politics, we have to fear that it is reserved for some still distant age to see Philosophical History attain its highest perfection.

N° 6. SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 1785.

A FEW mornings ago I was agreeably surprised with a very early call from my newly-acquired friend Colonel Caustic. ''Tis on a foolish piece of business,' said he, 'I give you the trouble of this visit. You must know I had an appointment with your friend S—— to go to the play this evening, which a particular affair that has come across him will prevent his keeping; and as a man, after making such an arrangement, feels it irksome to be disappointed (at least it is so with an old methodical fellow like me), I have taken the liberty of calling, to ask if you will supply his place: I might have had one or two other conductors; but it is only with certain people I chuse to go to such places. Seeing a play, or indeed any thing else, won't do at my time of life, either alone, or in company not quite to one's mind. 'Tis like drinking a bottle of claret; the liquor is something; but nine-tenths of the bargain is in the companion with whom one drinks it.' As he spoke this, he gave me his hand with such an air of cordiality—methought we had been acquainted these forty years;—I took it with equal warmth, and assured him, truly, it would give me infinite pleasure to attend him.

When we went to the Theatre in the evening, and while I was reading the box list, to determine where we should endeavour to find a place, a Lady of the Colonel's acquaintance happening to come in, begged our acceptance of plaees in her box. We entered accordingly; and I placed my old friend in a situation where I thought he could most conveniently

command a view both of the company and of the stage. He had never been in our present House before, and allowed that in size and convenience it exceeded the old one, though he would not grant so much as the Lady and I demanded on that score. 'I know,' said he, 'you are in the right; but one don't easily get rid of first impressions; I can't make you conceive what a play was to me some fifty years ago, with what feelings I heard the last music begin, nor how my heart beat when it ceased.'—'Why, it is very true, Colonel,' said the Lady, 'one can't retain those feelings always.'—'It it is something,' said I, 'to have had them once.'——'Why, if I may judge from the little I have seen,' replied the Colonel, 'your young folks have no time for them now-a-days; their pleasures begin so early, and come so thick.'—'Tis the way to make the most of their time.'——'Pardon me, Madam,' said he, 'I don't think so: 'tis like the difference between your hot-house asparagus and my garden ones; the last have their green and their white; but the first is tasteless from the very top.' The Lady had not time to study the allusion; for her company began to come into the box and continued coming in during all the first act of the comedy. On one side of Colonel Caustic sat a Lady with a *Lunardi* hat; before him was placed one with a feathered head-dress. Lunardi and the Feathers talked and nodded to one another about an appointment at a milliner's next morning. I sat quite behind, as is my custom, and betook myself to meditation. The Colonel was not quite so patient; he tried to see the stage, and got a flying vizzy now and then; but in the attempt, he got such a whisk from Miss Feathers on one cheek, and such a poke from the wires of Miss Lunardi on t'other, that he was fain to give up the matter of seeing;—as to hearing it was out of the question.

'I hope Colonel, you have been well entertained,' said the mistress of the box, at the end of the act. 'Wonderfully well,' said the Colonel.——'That *La Mash* is a monstrous comical fellow!'—'Oh! as to that, Madam, I know nothing of the matter: in your Ladyship's box one is quite independent of the play-crs.'—He made a sign to me: I opened the box door, and stood waiting for his coming with me.—'Where are you going, Colonel?' said the Lady, as he stepped over the last bench. 'To the Play, Madam,' said he, bowing, and shutting the door.

For that purpose we went to the pit, where, though it was pretty much crowded, we got ourselves seated in a very centrical place. There is something in Colonel Caustic's look and appearance, not so much of the form only, but the sentiment of good breeding, that it is not easy to resist shewing him any civility in one's power. While we stood near the door, a party in the middle of one of the rows beckoned to us, and let us know that we might find room by them; and the Colonel, not without many scruples of complaisance, at last accepted the invitation.

We had not long been in possession of our place before the second act began. We had now an opportunity of hearing the Play, as though, the conversation in the box we had left, which by this time was reinforced with several new performers, was about as loud as that of the Players, we were nearer to the talkers in front than those behind us. When the act was over, I repeated Lady ——'s interrogatory as to the Colonel's entertainment. 'I begin,' said he, putting his snuff-box to his nose, 'to find the inattention of my former box-fellows not quite so unreasonable.'—'Our company of this season, said a brother officer, who sat near us, to Colonel Caustic, 'is a very numerous one; they can get up any

new Play in a week. —'I am not so much surprised, Sir,' replied the Colonel, 'at the number of your Players, as I am at the number of the audience.'—'Most of the new performers are drafts from the English and Irish stages.'——'From the *aukward division* of them, Ipresume.'—'You are a severe critic, Sir,' replied the officer; 'but the house has been as full as you see it every night these three weeks.'—'I can easily believe it,' said the Colonel.

As the Play went on, the Colonel was asked his opinion of it by this gentleman and one or two more of his neighbours. He was shy of venturing his judgment on the piece; they were kind enough to direct him how to form one. 'This is a very favourite Comedy, Sir, and has had a great run at Drury Lane.'—'Why, gentlemen,' said he, 'I have no doubt of the comedy being an excellent Comedy, since you tell me so; and to be sure those gentlemen and ladies who make up the *dramatis personæ* of it, say a number of good things, some of them not the worse for having been said last century by *Joe Miller;* but I am often at a loss to know what they would be at, and wish for a little of my old friend Bayes's insinuation to direct me.'—'You mean, Sir, that the plor is involved.'—'Pardon me, Sir, not at all; 'tis a perfectly clear plot,' 'as clear as the sun in the cucumber,' as Anthonio in *Venice Preserv'd* says. The hero and heroine are to be married, and they are at a loss how to get it put off till the fifth act.'—'You will see, Sir, how the last scene will wind it up.'—'Oh! I have no doubt, Sir, that it will end at the dropping of the curtain.'

Before the dropping of the curtain, however, it was not easy to attend to that winding up of the plot which was promised us. Between gentlemen coming into the house from dinner parties, and ladies going out of it to evening ones, the disorder in the boxes,

and the calling to order in the pit, the business of the Comedy was rather supposed than followed; and the actors themselves seemed inclined to slur it a little, being too well bred not to perceive that they interrupted the arrangement of some of the genteelest part of their audience.

When the curtain was down, I saw Colonel Caustie throw his eye round the house with a look which I knew had nothing to do with the Comedy. After a silence of two or three minutes, in which I did not chuse to interrupt him, 'Amidst the various calculations of lives,' said he, 'is there any table for the life of a Beauty?'—'I believe not,' said I, smiling; 'there is a fragility in that, which neither Price nor Maseres ever thought of applying figures to.'—'Tis a sort of mortality,' continued the Colonel, 'which, at such a time as this, at the ending of some public entertainment, I have often thought on with a very melancholy feeling. An old batchelor like me, who has no girls of his own, except he is a very peevish fellow, which I hope I am not, looks on every one of these young creatures in some measure as a daughter; and when I think how many children of that sort I have lost—for there are a thousand ways of a Beauty's dying—it almost brings tears into my eyes. Then they are so spoiled while they do live. Here I am as splenetic as before I was melancholy. Those flower-beds we see, so fair to look on,—what useless weeds are suffered to grow up with them!'—'I do not think, Colonel, that the mere *flower* part is left uncultivated.—'Why even as to that, 'tis artificially forced before its time. A woman has a character even as a Beauty. A Beauty, a toast, a fine woman, merely considered as such, has a sort of professional character, which it requires some sense and accomplishments to maintain. Now-a-days, there are so many irregulars who practise at fifteen, without

a single requisite except mere outside!—if we go a little farther, and consider a woman as something more than a Beauty; when we regard the sex as that gentle but irresistable power that should mould the world to a finer form; that should teach benignity to wisdom, to virtue grace, humanity to valour; when we look on them in less eminent, but not less useful points of view, as those *dii penates*, those household deities, from whom man is to find comfort and protection, who are to smooth the ruggedness of his labours, the irksomeness and cares of business; who are to blunt the sting of his sorrows, and the bitterness of his disappointment!—You think me a fool for declaiming thus.'—'No, upon my soul, don't I; I hope you think better of me than to suppose so.'—'But I may come down from my declamation. Yonder are a set, fluttering in that box there,—young to be sure, but they will never be older, except in wrinkles—I don't suppose they have an idea in their heads beyond the colour of ribbon, the placing of a feather, or the step of a cotillon!—And yet they may get husbands.'—'If it please God,' said I.—'And be the mothers of the next generation.'—'Tis to be hoped.'—'Well, well, old Caustic will be in his grave by that time!'—

There was what Shakspeare calls 'a humourous sadness' in the thought, at which I did not well know whether to smile or be sorrowful. But on the whole, it was one I did not chuse to press too close on. I feel that I begin to love this old man exceedingly; and having acquired him late, I hope I shall not lose him soon.

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N° 7. SATURDAY, MARCH 19, 1785.

To the Author of the Lounger.

Παρχ τα δεινα φρονιμωτερος. AEON.

SIR,

THE art of knowing ourselves has been recommended by the moralists of all ages; and its attainment inculcated with that earnestness which implies both a conviction with that earnestness which implies both a conviction of its high value, and a sense of its difficulty. The great obstacle to the acquisition of this most desirable species of instruction, is acknowledged to be that self-deceit by which the same vices or defects which we keenly note in the character of others, and judge of with vigour and severity, are viewed in ourselves through a medium of partial indulgence. Though unable to resist the seductions to a deviation from duty, we cannot endure the avowal of our own depravity. We are anxious to hide our weakness from ourselves, as well as from others; and our ingenuity is exerted to devise specious apologies and subterfuges. 'Reason panders Will;' and thus it may be said, though parodoxically, yet truly, that the love of virtue itself is a secondary cause of our continuance in the practice of vice.

The effectual removal of this veil of self-deceit is what the weakness of our nature, perhaps, prevents us to hope can ever be accomplished: yet, though not completely removed, it may be partially withdrawn. I have often thought, that should a man be really in earnest in the desire of attaining a knowledge of his own character, there are times and cir-

cumstances which lay it open before him: there are situations which dissipate for a while that mist of errors which hides him from his own eyes, and force an acknowledgement of many defections from virtue, many a desertion to vice, which he would blush to be suspected of by others.

In estimating the characters of men, we are often sensible of great revolutions in our opinions. The same person who at one time possessed our approbation or esteem, at another is perhaps become the object of our aversion. The man whom formerly perhaps we disregarded as of a weak understanding, we afterwards discover to possess considerable abilities. He whom some unfavourable circumstances have led us to suspect of a deficiency in moral rectitude, may afterwards, on a more intimate acquaintance, be found of the most scrupulous integrity.—The frequent experience of those errors in judgment, will evince to us the folly and danger of an implicit reliance on our own opinions; will inculcate a salutary distrust of their foundation, and a conviction of the perverting influence of our ruling passions and prejudices. And this, Sir, is no inconsiderable advance in the science of self-knowledge.

In the perusal of history, or of the more limited pictures which biography presents to us, there is no reader who does not take a warm interest in every thing that regards a truly deserving character; who does not feel a sensible pleasure in those instances where the benevolent purposes of such a person have been attended with success, or his virtuous actions followed by reward. This approbation paid to virtue is a tribute of the heart, which is given with ease, which is bestowed even with pleasure. But in life itself, it is unhappily found that virtue has not the same concomitant approbation. The same instances of generosity, of humanity, of candour, temperance,

and humility, which we applaud in those records of the dead, we slightly regard in our intercourse with the living. The jealousy of a competitor is an insuperable obstacle to esteem. But of the competition of the dead we have no jealousy: for they arrogate no substantial rewards; their reputation anticipates no promotions which we seek, no emoluments which we covet; and therefore their praise is heard without the pang of envy or the fear of rivalship.

The contrast of opinions, of which we have daily experience in our own breasts, is an important object of attention to him who truly desires to attain a knowledge of his own character. It furnishes that species of proof which has attended with direct conviction, and which it is impossible to resist. We are compelled to acknowledge the depravity of our hearts: for where the same objects create opposite perceptions, the error must be in him who perceives them.

The effect of this change in our opinions, in substantiating (if I may so say) our defects, is never so perceptible as when, on the death of a person who was well known to us, we compare the idea we formed of his character when alive, with that which we now entertain of him. His excellencies and defects are now more impartially estimated. On the former, the memory dwells with peculiar satisfaction, and indulges a melancholy pleasure in bestowing its tribute of approbation. On the latter, we kindly throw the veil of charitable alleviation: we reflect on our own imbecility; we find apoligies for another in the weakness of our own nature, and impute the error of the individual to the imperfection of the species.

But, above all, should it happen that the person thus removed by death was one who had approved himself our friend, and whose kind affections we had repeatedly experienced, the difference we now per-

ceive in our estimate of such a character, is apt to strike the mind with the most forcible conviction of our own unworthiness. Memory is industrious to torment us with the recollection of numberless instances of merit we have overlooked, of kindness we have not returned, of services repaid with cold neglect. The injury we have done is aggravated by the reflection that it cannot be repaired; for he whose life was perhaps embittered by our ingratitude, is now insensible to our contrition.

Ah, Sir! the man who now writes to you bears witness himself to the misery of that feeling which he describes. He who now addresses you was once blest with the affection of the best the most amiable of women. When I married my Maria, engaged to her by that esteem which an acquaintance almost from infancy had produced, I knew not half her worth. The situation in which she was now placed, brought to my view many points of excellence which were before undiscovered. Must I own to my shame, that the possession of this treasure diminished its value? Fool that I was! I knew not my own happiness till I had forever lost it. Six years were the short period of our union: Would to Heaven that term were yet to live again! I loved Maria:—Severely as I am now disposed to review my past conduct, I cannot reproach myself with a failure in affection. But what human being could have been insensible to loveliness, to worth, to tenderness like hers? Poor was that affection which often preferred the most trivial selfish gratification to her wishes or requests; and of small value was that regard, which a sudden gust of passion could, at times, entirely obliterate.

It was my character, Sir, as that of many, to see the path of duty and propriety, but to have the weakness to be for ever deviating from it. Educated

in a respectable sphere of life, but possessing a narrow income, which with strict œconomy was barely sufficient to maintain with decency that station which we occupied, it was the care of my Maria to superintend herself the minutest article of our domestic concerns, and thus to retrench a variety of the ordinary expences of a family, from our own perfect skill in every useful accomplishment of her sex. Though fond of society, and formed to shine in it; though not insensible to admiration; (and what woman with her graces of person could have been insensible to it?) though possessing the becoming pride of appearing among her equals with equal advantages of dress and ornament; she sparingly indulged in gratifications which ill accorded with our limited fortune. She weighed with admirable discretion the greater against the lesser duties of life, and made no scruple to sacrifice the one, when they interfered ever so little with the performance of the other.

Shall I own, that to me, thoughtless, extravagant and vain, the conduct of this excellent woman appeared oftener to merit blame than approbation! Regardless of consequences, and careless of the future while I enjoyed the present, I censured that moderation, which was a continual reproach to my own profuseness. Incapable of imitating her example, I denied that it was meritorious; and what in her was real magnanimity, I, with equal weakness and ingratitude, attributed to poorness of spirit. How shall I describe to you, Sir, her mild and gentle demeanor, the patience with which she bore the most unmerited reproofs, the tender solicitude and endearing efforts which she used, to wean me from those ruinous indulgences to which vanity or appetite was continually prompting me! Too often were these efforts repaid by me with splenetic indifference, or checked at once by sarcasm or by anger.

'Tis but but a poor alleviation of the anguish I feel for these reflections, to remember, that, even while my Maria lived, the esteem which I sincerely felt for her virtues, the affection which I really bore her, and the sense I had of her tenderness, wrung my heart at times with the deepest remorse, and prompted me to atone for my injustice, by the warmest expressions of kindness and regard. Many a time, Sir, in those tranquil moments, when no wayward inclination or peevish humour overpowered my better feelings, have I firmly resolved, that my future conduct should make ample reparation for the offences of the past. Nor were these resolutions altogether fruitless; for while under the influence of this salutary conviction of my errors, I have so far amended them as to feel for a time a genuine relish for calm and domestic happiness. But how short this dawning of amendment? A new temptation presented itself, and my weak resolution yielded to the force of returning passion. With my former errors I resumed the despicable pride of justifying them, and every deviation from duty was aggravated by harshness and ill-humour.

Ever offending, and ever purposing to atone for my offences, I have now irretrievably lost the opportunity. That best of women is now no more. I have received her latest breath, and heard her last supplication, which was a prayer to Heaven to pour its blessings on the most unworthy of men!

Here let me end this letter.——No words can express the feelings which these reflections convey to the breast of LUCILIUS.

N° 8. SATURDAY, MARCH 26, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

Edinburgh, March 2.

I AM greatly pleased, Mr. Lounger, with your account of yourself, and your innocent and useful manner of sliding through the bustle of life. I sincerely wish that many of my friends and visitors would follow your example, and learn to be idle without disturbing those who are obliged, from their situation, to be busy. I suffer daily so much from the intrusion of a set of female Loungers (forgive me for using your title), that it has prompted me to address myself to you, in hopes that you will, in some of your future Essays, teach my unfortunately idle friends how to employ their tedious forenoons, without obliging me to be as idle as themselves. But to make you, Sir, fully sensible how much I suffer from Ladies who cannot kill time at home, I must inform you, that I am the wife of a gentleman whose fortune has been made by a steady application to a branch of business that obliges both him and me to be extremely attentive to those who employ him. A family of seven children makes it necessary for him still to continue in business. Our sons are attending such branches of education as will fit them for the different employments they have chosen. Our three daughters I am attempting to educate under my own eye, as the present boarding schools and governesses are much too expensive for people of our moderate fortune. I find so much pleasure in super-

intending every part of my daughters' education, that not an hour of the day is unemployed, or can hang heavy on my hands: But alas, Sir, how cruelly teasing is it, when I am set down to hear my youngest girl read, with Eliza and Mary at their work seated by me, to be broke in upon by Miss Flounce, who comes to tell me how charmingly she has improved upon Lady Chenille's new trimming, and assures me her bottle-green sattin was the sweetest and most admired dress at last assembly. Then, without observing that she interrupts me by her stay, she proceeds to give me an account of all the different dresses that she took hints from, to convince me how much her superior taste had improved upon that of her companions. When I am just expecting the conclusion of her uninteresting narration, her cousin, Miss Feathers, swims into the room, assures us she is happy to find us together, that she may tell us how Mrs. Panache had almost fainted away on seeing her new Figaro hat, with a plume of feathers in a much higher taste than her own. This introduces a smart dispute between the Ladies, whether plain or Figaro feathers are the most elegant and becoming. They at last agree to refer their dispute to Miss Tastey, and leave me in haste to obtain her decision.

I gladly resume my pleasing task, but find that Eliza has misplaced the colours in shading a violet, and Mary broke her needle, by attending too much to the Ladies' conversation. I have perhaps got matters adjusted, and little Anne has read half a page, when in totters Mrs. Qualm. This Lady, though always sick, is still able to come abroad every day, and wearies her acquaintance with the detail of her numberless complaints. A whole hour is lost to me by this new intrusion; and thus a forenoon is spent without improvement either to my daughters

or myself: and I am sorry to say, few days pass in which I have not cause to regret, that there is no pleasure to be found for Idlers at home. Were I a woman of quality, or perfectly independent, I might rid myself of these intruders, by being not at home; but in my situation I dare not shut my doors, lest I should give offence to people who are able to hurt my husband's business. In this distressed situation, I hope, Mr. Lounger will forgive me in offering a hint to him, which, if he would dress out in his sensible persuasive manner, I think I should soon be freed from the fatigue of entertaining Lounging Ladies, and they would be much more suitably amused than in my working parlour. My hint, Sir, is, that you would recommend a forenoon's conversation, or place of meeting, for Ladies and Gentlemen who must be in any company rather than their own. There, I think, if you would have the goodness to preside, and direct them how to amuse each other till the time of dressing for dinner, you would confer a high obligation on them, and a still greater on those who, like me, suffer now from the heavy burden of their insipid company. You, my good Sir, who have lounged about to such good purpose as to be able to improve others, will, I hope, take your weaker brothers and sisters under your direction; and if you will make Dunn's Rooms a Lounging Hall instead of a Chapel, I think I may venture to assure you it will be better attended in one character than in the other; and if your lectures can make the forenoons pass easily, and without the trouble of thinking to those Idlers, by drawing them together under your direction, and freeing the more employed part of the world from their unwelcome intrusion, you will greatly oblige many of your readers, particularly your admirer,

M. CAREFUL.

There is such an air of goodness in Mrs. Careful's letter, and I consider her morning's employment as of so very important a kind, that I would do much to afford her relief; but really that branch of our family of which she complains is so numerous, and so difficult to deal with, that I am afraid the attempts of any individual for their better regulation or disposal would be fruitless. With regard to our sex, some benevolent young gentlemen have already tried several projects similar to that suggested by Mrs. Careful, but apparently without success. They set a-foot a cock-pit to give play to our minds, and in the frost a drag-hunt to give exercise to our bodies: but the only effect those pastimes produced, was to furnish additional subjects for the idle to talk of, and to plague the busy with hearing them.

The set of people of whom my correspondent complains, are a sort of vagrants, or sturdy beggars, whom like others of the tribe, idleness sets afloat, to the disquiet of the industrious part of the community, on whom it should be a matter of public police not to suffer to molest our houses. A short clause in the new bill for the improvement of Edinburgh, might provide a work-house for those fashionable mumpers, who so importunately solicit a share of our time and attention, and whom unluckily, as Mrs. Careful observes, those doors only can shut out whose owners would suffer least from their getting in. None but people of a certain rank can always prevent those unwelcome visitors from 'bestowing (as Dogberry in the play says) all their tediousness upon their honours.'

Such an institution as I hint at would be of great use both to the community and to the objects of it, who might be assembled in the different wards, as in

the Spin-house of Amsterdam, each employed in the occupation most congenial to their former manner of living. For young ladies *Poupées* might be provided, on which to practise the invention of caps, the suiting of ribbands, the position and size of curls, and the grouping of feathers. Ladies a little more advanced might be employed in the working up of Novels, or the weaving of Rebuses and Enigmas. At a still maturer age, they could be employed in making matches; and at the inner end of that ward, there might be a close one, for the fabrication of Scandal.

The male Idlers might have another wing of the building, where the places of reception and employment should be analogous to the female. The same genius that goes to the dressing of a female figure, would suffice to the undressing of a male one; for inventing the bushy club and whiskers, the knotted handkerchief round the neck, the powdered back, the colours for three or four under-waistcoats, the short bludgeon, and the hanging boot. Certain Magazines and Novels, with the Sportsman's Kalendar, might supply the literary wants of the second class; Hazard and Pharo might employ the third; and Politics would be the natural occupation of the fourth. For Ladies like Mrs. Qualm, mentioned in Mrs. Careful's letter, and for gentlemen of similar temperaments, a sick-ward must be provided, where the nervous, the rheumatic, and the bilious, might find names and consolation for their disorders. But as their chief comfort arises from having patient listeners to their complaints, I would propose their being accommodated with attendants from the academy for the deaf and dumb.

As to what the players call the property of the house, several articles would serve indiscriminately for both divisions. Snuff-boxes, tooth-picks, and

mirrors, would be of equal use in both; lap-dogs might be distributed in one, pointers and spaniels in the other; the crack of fans might enliven the female, and that of whips the male ward. At battledore and shuttlecock they might meet, like the two houses of Parliament in the Painted Chamber, and make a noise in conjunction. Tea would of course be furnished to the ladies, and wine to the gentlemen.

Such an institution would serve both as an hospital and a school;—both as a place of retreat for past services, and of instruction for services to come. Here, from the lower orders, great men might find cork-drawers, butts, and hearers; great ladies might procure humble companions, tea-makers, and tale-bearers. If from the higher ranks any one should chuse a wife or a husband, they would at least have the advantage of chusing them under their real and undisguised characters, and, like dealers at open market, would know their bargain before they purchased it.

V

N° 9. SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 1785.

To the Author of the Lounger.

SIR,

I AM the descendant of an ancient and respectable family. The estate which I inherit was once reckoned a good one; but it has comparatively, sunk much in its value by the late inundation of fortunes

from the East and West Indies. My father bestowed upon me the best education which this country could afford; and it was his plan, after I had finished my studies at the University, and had arrived at that age when I could see and judge for myself, that I should make the Tour of Europe. The period destined for this purpose approached, and I was taking measures to prepare for it. Almost the only disagreeable feeling I had in leaving my native country for a few years, was the taking leave of a young Lady for whom I had formed the most sincere and warm attachment. Aspasia was beautiful in her person and not less lovely in her mind. Endowed with the most tender sensibility, she possessed at the same time a purity and an ingenuousness of character which to me was most enchanting. There was a simplicity and innocence in all her thoughts and actions, which seemed to realise those pictures the poets have given us of the golden age. Warmly interested as I felt myself in her, and attentive as I was to her every word and action, I at times thought I could discover that I had also created an interest in her mind, though perhaps even she herself was not conscious of it.

I hesitated long, before I set out on my travels, whether I should disclose to her the sentiments of my heart. The reasons for this step were so obvious, that they need not be mentioned; but, on the other hand, strong motives dissuaded me against it. It was impossible for me to settle in life till my return from abroad; and though I was resolved to consider myself as most strictly engaged to her, yet it struck me as a want of generosity and confidence, to bring her under any obligation, or to restrain the subsequent freedom of her choice by any tie that looked only to futurity. This motive prevailed with me. Our last parting was inexpressibly tender; and

though not a word escaped me which could indicate the situation of my heart, yet she must have been blind indeed if she did not discover how dear she was to me.

During the time I was abroad I heard repeatedly concerning Aspasia. The last accounts I received of her gave me much uneasiness. I was informed, that she discovered a fondness for dress, a vanity and love of admiration unworthy of her, and unlike her former deportment. I trembled at those reports; unsuitable as they were to her former character, I began to think that the very purity and simplicity of soul which I had so much admired in her, might, when she came to mingle in the world, put her off her guard, and render her more a prey, than one of a less pure mind, to the seductions of vanity and folly. I recollected a remark which I had somewhere met with, that the finest natures are the most apt to be hurt, as the finest plants are the soonest nipped by the frost; and that, like those plants, they require to be sheltered and guarded to prevent their being blasted.

In a state of anxiety which cannot easily be described, I shortened the remaining period of my being abroad, and returned home as soon as I possibly could. On my arrival I learned that Aspasia had fallen a prey to the seductions of vanity, and to that warmth of mind which made her the dupe of appearances, alas! I fear, the martyr of deception!—The story is too long for my recital at present; nor can I yet easily bear its recollection—let me only tell you, that she had forgotten Hortensius, and six weeks before my arrival had married a young coxcomb, who in reality had nothing but what she thought fashion and a pair of colours to recommend him.

Upon my return home, I found parliament was on the eve of a dissolution, and that different candidates had already declared themselves for the next election. My father, who had died while I was abroad, had in a former parliament represented the county in which our principal family estate was situated; my friends now proposed to me to start candidate. To this proposal I felt a good deal of reluctance: and the late severe shock I had met with increased my unwillingness. Nevertheless, the very weakness of mind which that affliction had created, made me the more easily put myself under the direction of my friends; and I yielded to their solicitations. On looking over the list of voters, I found, that a considerable part of them were particularly connected with myself; and others were young men who had been my school companions, and had since remained my intimate acquaintance. From many of them I had messages welcoming my return to the country, and giving at the same time oblique hints of the propriety of my setting up as candidate, and of the certainty of my meeting with success. Encouraged by such hopes, I began my canvas; and wherever I went I was favourably received. I was repeatedly advised to persist; and though I did not obtain promises from many, was constantly flattered with assurances that I should not be disappointed. My opponent was a man new and unknown in the country, but who had lately purchased an estate in it, and had brought home an immense fortune from India, which, it was said, gave him considerable influence in the direction of affairs in that quarter of the world. I was repeatedly told, that one so well known, and so much esteemed in the county as I was, whose family had been so long and so much respected there, had nothing to fear from a stranger. The day of election, however, was drawing nigh:

and I now made another round of the county, expecting to have something more than general good wishes and flattering assurances of success. Though I still heard those good wishes and recommendations to continue my canvas as strongly expressed as ever, yet I found in those friends and well-wishers a still greater backwardness than before to bind themselves by engagements. On expressing my astonishment at this to Atticus, one of the few friends who had from the first engaged himself to me in the warmest manner, he expressed himself as follows: 'Be not surprised, my dear Hortensius; the longer a man lives in the world, he will find less reason to be surprised at any thing. I have for some time seen how matters were going. Those friends in whom you trusted the most, who were the warmest in pushing you to stand candidate, neither mean now, nor ever meant, to serve you; their only object was to serve themselves. They wished you to stand, not that you might gain your election, but that there might be a contest in the county. Before you appeared they knew that Sir Thomas Booty was to be candidate; they knew his great influence, and they were resolved he should be their representative. But they wished not to dispose of their votes too cheaply; they wished to have their value enhanced by the dread of a competitor. Your family, your connections, the respectableness of your character, made you be considered as a person from whom Sir Thomas might expect a powerful opposition, and to prevail over whom promises and favours would be thought necessary; such promises and favours have not been wanting. In a word, his fortune and interest at Court are greater than yours, and that private friendship you so much relied on has been found light in the balance.'

These words of Atticus made a deep impression

on me. I now recollected a thousand circumstances which proved their truth. I at once took my resolution, and immediately declared that I gave up the competition, and left the field to Sir Thomas. No sooner was this known, than my good and trusty friends came all flocking to me, and expressed their astonishment at the step I had taken. They assured me, that I had given up the canvas with a most improper precipitation. I now too well understood their conduct; I gave them a civil answer, and despised them.

Thus disappointed in the two great objects of the human heart, love and ambition, I formed the resolution of quitting the promiscuous society of the world, of abandoning a town life, and betaking myself to solitude and retirement in the country. I now remembered to have read at college, that the goods of life were of two kinds, those which were external, and those which were internal; that the first were transient, uncertain, and derived from the will of others; that the last were durable, certain and self-derived; that the person who made the last his choice, placed his happiness on a sure foundation, on a rock above the rage of the fighting elements, and inaccessible to all the attacks of fortune. On this foundation I now resolved to build my happiness.

Besides the family estate in the county where my unfortunate project of ambition had taken place, I was possessed of a small property, situated in a remote part of the kingdom, but amidst the most beautiful and romantic scenery. Here I resolved to take up my residence for the future days of my life, to enter no more into the busy and ambitious pursuits of the world, but to enjoy the innocent, the undisturbed, the elegant pleasure of solicitude and retirement. In the scene of my intended residence

there was a small mansion-house, but the fields around it were left in the state in which Nature had formed them. I knew that by the skilful hand of Art, the romantic scenes of nature might be much aided and improved; and I already enjoyed, by anticipation, the happiness I expected to derive from the beauty of the place, and the ornaments I proposed to add to it. I purchased also a considerable library of books, and proposed to reap much pleasure from the perusal of them, and from the renewal of the studies of my early days, which had for some time been interrupted. In short, I pictured out to myself an elysium of enjoyment, a life of philosophic ease and happiness; and notwithstanding my present contempt of the world, and my idea of the vanity of its pursuits, I confess I had still so much of the world in me, as to feel some secret pleasure from the thought that I should be considered as a most accomplished pattern of taste and elegance in a retired and solitary life.

But I proceed to inform you, that I put my plan in execution, and retired from the world and its cares to my little paradise at B——. For some years of my residence there, I found my happiness come up to my expectations. I passed my time most delightfully, as I thought, in improving the appearance of my grounds, to beautifying the landscape, in planting a shrub, or directing the currant of a brook. My reading also gave me much amusement; it lay almost entirely in works of taste, the classics, and the best modern books of belles lettres. I felt a vanity in thinking my taste was every day improving, and that my natural sensibility of mind became more and more delicate.

But I did not long remain in this state. I began, at times, to feel a languor, a listlessness, which seemed to grow stronger at every return. I now

found my *ferme ornée* gave me little amusement; the charm of novelty was worn off, and I grew tired of having always under my eye the same objects, however beautiful; there was not a tree the shape of which I was not acquainted with, nor a walk which I had not a thousand times measured with my steps. My books, too, had lost their charms. My reading, as I have already said, lay almost entirely in books of taste; but I now found, instead of relieving my mind, this sort of reading fatigued and exhausted it. The enjoyment which I received was of a kind which rested in itself, and led to no farther pursuit; so that I became more and more languid, weakened, and inactive. This I have experienced to be the case with all pleasure arising from inanimate beauties, and from every thing that may be termed an object merely of taste; they all terminate in themselves, and lead to weariness and satiety, unlike the exercise of the social affections, where every enjoyment multiplies itself, and leads to still fuller and more endearing sources of delight. Many a time have I felt a craving void in my heart, and how to fill it up I knew not. The very indolence which this state of mind created, heightened the evil, by depriving me of the power of trying to banish it. When the morning came, I have been unwilling to get out of bed, because I knew not what to do when I should get up; and at night I have been afraid to lie down, because I knew, that when the night was spent, it would only lead to the nothingness of the next day. Many a summer afternoon have I spent, stretched on a sopha, and looking through the window, with a book in my hand, unable either to read the book, or to venture forth into the fields; and many a winter night has been employed in doing little more than sitting in an easy chair, and gazing in the fire. In this state I have been sometimes tempted to wish for

the perfect torpor or patient dulness. Without the activity of thought, I was liable to the reproach of thinking; and, instead of the quiet in which vacant souls are rocked by Indolence, I found her slumbers, like the broken sleep of a fever, weary instead of refreshing me. I frequently felt twitches of mind from a sense of my own inactive uselessness; and the accounts I sometimes received of the success in projects of ambition of others whom I knew, and once thought my inferiors added poignancy to my self-reproach.

I made an effort to dispel my sorrows, by keeping company with my neighbours. Most of them were indeed distant; but distance in that part of the country is no bar to visits. In the society of my neighbours, however, I found no amusement; the inhabitants of the country had no conversation which could afford me any pleasure; and the company of some bucks, who came from town to reside a few months for the sake of sport, was still more intolerable. The only connection I had with them arose from their abusing my servants, and breaking down my fences.

I sometimes received a visit from Atticus, and a few other friends; with whom I had always kept up a correspondence, and for whom I still entertained the most sincere regard. But even their visits did not yield me much enjoyment. Every year I found growing more and more upon me shyness, a reserve, and an awkwardness, which diminished my pleasure even in the company of those who had been my most intimate friends. When they came to see me, I felt myself different from them; I wished to hide myself from their sight. In their useful talents, in the activity of their minds, there was a reproof to my situation which I could not easily bear; when they were gone, I felt a greater blank than ever, and

upbraided myself for prizing so little their excellent company.

Such now is, and such for many years past has been the tenor of my life. I could picture it out more fully by a variety of other particulars; but I must have already tired you, and I hasten to a conclusion.

It may perhaps be asked, To what purpose this so long detail? I answer, To caution others who have not had my experience, against the errors I have committed. There is a certain delicacy of mind which is not incompatible with the highest ambition; but when that ambition receives a check in its early beginning, when that delicacy is hurt by some unexpected and sore misfortune, a person of such a character is apt to quarrel with the world, and to seek for happiness without its range. But let your readers, Sir, particularly those of a warm and romantic cast, be assured, that happiness is not thus to be found. Men were born to live in society; and from society only can happiness be derived. The station of life requires activity and effort. For these was mankind formed; and those who do not contribute to the happiness of themselves and others by strenuous exertions of virtue, are unworthy of a place in the great theatre of the universe. Let not any one, therefore, in a moment of disgust, give up the ordinary cares and projects of the world, and indulge in ideas of that visionary bliss which exists only in romantic pictures and delusive representations of solitude and retirement. Let not one disappointment, nor even a series of disappointments, induce them to abandon the common road of life. 'Tis only a pettish child, when it is crossed, that is entitled to spurn from it its toy of happiness.

I remember to have read in a letter, of Shenstone's, if I mistake not, something to the following

purpose: 'You and I, my friend, left happiness when we deviated from the turnpike road of life. Wives, children, alliances, visits, the ordinary employments of the world, are necessary ingredients of happiness. A man with them may, from a variety of causes, be abundantly miserable; but without them he cannot be happy.' From long experience, I can bear a full testimony to the truth of this remark.—I am, &c. HORTENSIUS.

P

N° 10. SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR,

SOMEWHAT more than thirty years ago, I retired to a family-seat in a remote part of Scotland, where I have passed my time ever since. There the management and improvement of my estate, the society of a few friends, and a good collection of books, enabled me to pass my days in a manner much to my satisfaction; and there I experienced more happiness than you, Sir, accustomed to great cities, will perhaps readily believe.

Some weeks ago, a piece of important family business brought me to town. The morning after I arrived, I sent for a tailor, wishing to make a decent appearance in your city; which, by the way, I found so much changed since I had left it, that till I got into what is called the Old Town, I did not know where I was, and could not recognise the ancient dusky capital of Caledonia. As I was at no time

very attentive to dress, and as now I only wished to comply so far with the fashion of the times, as not to offend those with whom I was to mingle in society, I desired my tailor to make me a plain suit of clothes, leaving the choice of the colour, &c. entirely to him. Next day, he brought me home a blue frock, a scarlet waistcoat, with gold buttons, and a pair of black silk breeches. I could not help observing, that I should have preferred a plain suit, all of a piece, to the party-coloured garment in which he had decked me. But he shut my mouth, by saying, that it was quite the fashion; that every body wore it; that he had made a suit of the same kind for Mr. ——, one of his best customers, who informed him that at London nothing else was worn.

Being engaged to dine at the house of a gentleman high in office, I dressed myself in my new suit; and when I joined the company, which was numerous, I found that my tailor had done me justice, almost every body being precisely in the same dress; and some of the guests were of the first distinction.

After the usual compliments were over, the conversation turned upon the excellence of the present administration. Above all, the virtues and the talents of the first minister were mentioned in the warmest terms of approbation. One talked of his eloquence in public debate, and in that particular gave him the preference to all his contemporaries; another dwelt upon his wisdom and sagacity in counsel, so astonishing at his early years; a third expatiated upon his pure and unblemished character, and mentioned the happiness the country might expect from a minister who carried into office every virtue which could adorn private life. Although no politician or party-man, as a good citizen, and a well-

wisher to my country, I felt a real satisfaction from this flattering account of our present situation; yet I at length began to wish that the conversation would take some other turn, and become a little more general. There were in company men of distinguished name in the literary world, and I longed to hear them on some subject of literature. In this view, though naturally shy in the company of strangers, I endeavoured to introduce some topics of that kind: but all my attempts proved fruitless, and the conversation immediately recurred to its original channel. In a word, Sir, we parted as we met, resounding the praises of the minister, and of the measures of the present administration.

Next day I went to dine at the house of Lord ——, to whom I have the honour of being related. I found assembled a large company of ladies and gentlemen. Soon after I entered the room we were called to dinner; and at table I had the good fortune to be placed next to the beautiful and sprightly Lady ——. As upon the former day, so here, the conversation soon turned upon the present administration; but, to my no small astonishment, the opinion of every person present was in every particular directly opposite to every opinion I had heard the day before. I was now told, that in the hands of a presumptuous boy (for so the minister was termed) the nation must go to ruin;—that nothing could save us but placing at the head of affairs a man of distinguished abilities, of a bold and vigorous mind, capable of planning and of executing such measures as could alone restore the empire to its pristine glory. After canvassing the public character of the minister, they proceeded to an investigation of his private deportment, in which they did not seem disposed to allow him those virtues and good qualities which, on

the former day, I had heard so highly extolled. In this conversation the Ladies bore a part, and seemed to be as warmly interested as the men.

I ventured to ask Lady —— what objection she had to Mr. Pitt? 'O, I can't bear him,' said she, 'he does not like us; and the only mark of attention he ever paid us, was imposing an odious burden upon our ruffs and aprons.' At that instant I happened to unbutton my coat, and Lady —— immediately exclaimed, 'Lord, Sir, are you a Pittite? I took you for one of us.' I, though surprised at the question, answered gravely, that I was no more a Pittite than a Hittite. 'Then, Sir, why do you wear a red waistcoat? I am sick at the very sight of it. Why are you not in Buff? I would not give a farthing for a man but in Buff.'

This observation called my attention to the dress of the gentlemen at table, and I found that all of them were dressed in buff waistcoats, to which some of them, who appeared to be most zealous in their political principles, had added buff breeches. I then proceeded to examine the dress of the Ladies, and found that most of them wore a fox's tail by way of decoration in their head-dress. My neighbour Lady —— testified her attachment to the ex-minister by another piece of dress, which I own I found a little offensive. She wore a large muff, made of the skin of our common red fox, which, from some error, I presume, in the method of preparing it, had a perfume not the most agreeable in the world. I could not help remarking this to Lady ——, who, with great good humour, admitted that my observation was just; but added, twirling round her muff upon a beautiful well-turned arm, 'that were it ten times worse, she would wear it for the sake of her dear Carlo.'

In short, Sir, I now find that the good people of

your town are divided into two opposite parties, and that a spirit of faction universally prevails. Amidst those zealots by whom I am surrounded, I find myself in an awkward and unpleasant situation. I am a plain man, and though I love my King and country, and have as high a veneration for the British constitution as any man in the island, I have ever been an enemy to faction, and have always thought that men in a private station, like me, were not called upon, and indeed not entitled, to take a violent concern in affairs of state, or the government of the nation. With these principles I find, that I am not acceptable to either party. My red waistcoat, which now that I have got it, I am unwilling to throw aside, gives me at first ready access to the Pittites: but when they find that I cannot enter into all their ideas, they consider me either as an enemy in disguise, or, what is perhaps still worse in their estimation, as a lukewarm friend. On the other hand, the Foxites, who, from my dress, consider me as attached to the opposite faction, seem to be displeased with me for not taking part against them with sufficient keenness and spirit; they talk of me as a Trimmer, and plainly insinuate, that my only object is to keep well with both parties, and avoid giving offence to either.

In this hard situation, I have resolved to apply to you for advice. In my own name, then, and in the name of all those who, like myself, have nothing to hope and nothing to fear from either of the contending parties, be so good as point out what conduct one ought to pursue, who, though interested in the general welfare of his country, feels no inclination to connect himself with either of the parties who are now struggling for the government of it.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

NEUTER.

I am the better qualified to advise my correspondent Neuter, from having experienced the same distress myself. About a year ago, when the contest between the opposite parties was at its greatest height, I was a good deal puzzled how to act. A friend to whom I communicated my distress, advised me to get both a red and a buff waistcoat, and to wear them alternately. But it occurred to me, that wearing the distinguished badge of both parties, might have the appearance of something deceitful, and might expose me to a worse appellation than than that of Trimmer. After due deliberation, therefore, I equipped myself in a suit of black, which I resolved to wear till the present dissensions should subside. I have adhered rigidly to this resolution, except that sometimes when I wish to make a smarter figure than common, I enliven my dress by putting on a brown or a grey frock over my black waistcoat. Partly by this prudent caution, and partly by my known indolence of character, I have continued to steer tolerably well between the contending factions, without giving offence even to the zealots of either.

In Britain we enjoy the most perfect system of freedom that ever existed in any society. But from the very nature of our government, we must necessarily be exposed to the violence of faction; and when the spirit of party runs high, when the fever is at the height, it naturally breaks out into external appearances, always ridiculous, and sometimes whimsical to the last degree.

The little extravagancies of which I complain, are not confined to those who may be considered as belonging in some measure to the party whose livery

they wear. We daily see men possessing no political influence, and equally incapable of supporting administration as of aiding opposition, engaging keenly in party; and, like the fabled fly upon the wheel, fondly imagining that the machine of government is accelerated or retarded by them. Even the lowest and most insignificant of mankind take upon them to enlist under the banners of a Pitt or a Fox, and to assume the badges of that party to which they wish to attach themselves, and by which they hope to be drawn from their own natural insignificance.

Were this folly confined to the men, I should regret it less. But unhappily a spirit of party prevails with equal, if not greater violence among the ladies. My illustrious predecessor, the Spectator, justly observes, that 'party-rage is a male vice, made up of many angry and cruel passions, that are altogether repugnant to the softness, the modesty, and those other endearing qualities which are natural to the fair sex.' After recording the party-patches by which the ladies of those days marked their political principles, Mr. Addison expresses himself in these words: 'This account of party-patches will, I am afraid, appear improbable to those who live at a distance from the fashionable world; but as it is a distinction of a very singular nature, and what, perhaps, may never meet with a parallel, I think I should not have discharged the office of a faithful Spectator, had not I recorded it.'

Every one who attends to the progress and change of manners, must be struck with this passage. The enormity of which Mr. Addison here complains, and which he seems to suppose would hardly be believed by those who had not seen it, consisted in this, that at the Opera and Playhouse, a Whig beauty wore her patches on one side of her forehead, while a

Tory toast patched upon the other. Had the fair of the present times distinguished their political principles in the same inoffensive manner, had they gone no farther than wearing those tails and muffs mentioned by my correspondent, I, who am ever averse to find fault with their conduct, might have been disposed to wink at the absurdity of placing the tail of a fox on the head of a fine woman; and it is with pleasure I remark, that the Ladies of Edinburgh have contented themselves with such little eccentricities of appearance, and never indulged in those excesses which prevailed in other parts of the island, particularly in the capital. There, I am sorry to say, our female politicians have gone much farther, and have exerted themselves in support of their party, in a manner much more decided and more vigorous. We have seen 'the first and fairest of our British dames' marching under the banners of the 'Man of the People,' or of 'Pitt and Constitution,' exposing their charms to the view and to the insults of a lewd rabble, mingling in scenes in which nothing but necessity and a sense of duty could engage any man of delicacy and taste to bear a part. If Mr. Addison thought that the party-patches of his fair contemporaries might appear improbable, what would he have said had he lived to see what we have seen! To check the little improprieties of his day, he employed his delicate satire, his fine and elegant raillery: but had he witnessed the enormities of which I complain, he perhaps might have thought that the keen caustic of a Juvenal would not have been too severe.

Perhaps it may be thought that I have said more than was necessary, upon a temporary ebullition of party-zeal, which it is to be hoped has now subsided. But I own I am always sensibly hurt with any thing which affects the purity and delicacy of the sex.

Besides, the contagion of such an example spreads far and wide: it is not confined to one place, or to the present time; it taints the manners of the rising generation, who, by seeing and hearing of such enormities, may become familiarized with them, may in their time be led to imitate their mothers, and, if possible, to indulge in still greater excesses. Indeed, if our ladies go on improving as politicians, and as tools of a party, I shall not be surprised, if, in a few years, duels, which seem now to be going out of fashion among the men, should become fashionable among the women. We may then read in the papers such paragraphs as the following:

'Yesterday a duel was fought in Hyde Parke, between the Countess of —— and Lady ——. The Countess received a shot in her left curl, and Lady —— escaped a dangerous wound by means of a large black bushy muff, in which the ball of her antagonist happily lodged. The seconds then interposed, and the combatants were parted without further mischief. We are told the quarrel between these celebrated beauties was occasioned by some high words which passed between them on the hustings in Covent Garden, where the Countess appeared in support of Sir H. W. the ministerial candidate, and Lady ——, in support of Mr. J. R. the popular candidate.'

'We hear Lady —— has, at the earnest desire of her husband, and of all the friends of that ancient family, declined to fight Mrs. —— till after she is brought to bed; so that the duel cannot take place for some months. The quarrel took its rise from something that dropped from Mrs. —— in pressing into the gallery of the House of Commons, to hear the debate on Mr. ——'s motion for regulating trade and navigation.'

As, however, I would not wish to part with my

fair readers (for whom I entertain the truest respect and regard) in bad humour, I must assure them, that I venture this remonstrance, not with the severity of a censor, but with the anxiety of a friend. I know both the extent and the importance of their power; and, for the sake of our sex as much as theirs, I wish them not to forfeit it, by a departure from that modesty, that gentleness, those feminine graces, which are the supports of an influence so essential to the manners and to the happiness of society.

R

N° 11. SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

Occupatus nihil agendo.

SIR,

As I have the honour of being your namesake, and descended from an ancient race of Loungers, I rejoiced when I was informed, that one of our illustrious name and family began to make a figure in the literary world, and to publish his lucubrations weekly in the capital of Scotland. I have spent a great part of my life in studying the genealogies, histories, and characters of the several branches of our flourishing family. With this view, I have visited every city, town and village in the kingdom, and have had the happiness to meet with near relations in every place, except Paisley, Kilmarnock, and a few dirty manu-

facturing towns. From the observations I have made in my travels, I am fully convinced, that, if all the members of our family take in your paper, you will be the most popular and successful writer of the present age, and your works will pass through more editions than either the Pilgrim's Progress or Robinson Crusoe.

The chief object of all my travels has been, to collect materials for a great work, in which I have been engaged above fifty years. It is one of the peculiar excellencies of our family, to do nothing in haste. This famous work will be entitled Biographia Loungeriana Scottica, or, The lives of the most eminent Loungers in Scotland, from the reign of Fergus I. to the present times. It will make two ponderous volumes in folio, to be published by subscription. The price to subscribers will be only six guineas; but to those unfortunate gentlemen who neglect to subscribe, the price may be, I know not how much. The first volume will contain the Lives of the Strenuous Loungers, and the second, the Lives of the Indolent Loungers. These are the two great branches into which our family is divided. Each volume will be adorned with twenty copper-plates, engraved by the most eminent artists, representing the easiest and most graceful postures for lounging in coaches, coffee-houses, taverns, drawing-rooms, play-houses, assembly-rooms, churches, colleges, courts of justice, &c. These plates will be of great utility, not only to fine ladies and fine gentlemen, but also to politicians, preachers, professors, students, lawyers, judges, and many others of all ranks. The frontispiece will be an elegant drawing of the outer Parliament-house in the middle of the session. To engage gentlemen to do themselves the honour to subscribe, I send you a short article, which I beg

you will publish in your entertaining paper, as a specimen of this excellent work.

'My late cousin, Sir Thomas Lounger of Loiterhall, in Lingerdale, was the eldest son of my good uncle Sir Timothy, and his Lady Mrs. Susan Dowdy of the Slatterington family. Sir Timothy died of a lethargy, with which he had been long afflicted; and Sir Thomas came to the possession of the estate and honours of his ancestors in the twenty-second year of his age. But the estate was then in a very bad condition in all respects. Two thirds of the rents would hardly pay the interest of the debts—the mansion-house was an old, cold, damp, ruinous castle, in the middle of a great morass—the farms were almost in a state of nature, the rents small and ill paid; the extensive moors and hills yielded little or nothing.

'Sir Thomas was then a strong, healthy, young man; and as he had been two winters at the college of Aberdeen, and thought himself much wiser and cleverer than any of his forefathers, he determined to retrieve the ruined fortunes, and revive the faded honours, of his family, by paying off all his debts, repairing or rebuilding his castle, draining his morass, improving his farms, cultivating his moors, and planting his hills. But he determined to do all this in the wisest, most cautious, and prudent manner; and never to engage in any undertaking till he had examined every circumstance, and provided against every obstacle and difficulty.

'Sir Thomas spent several years in forming plans for the payment of his debts, which he found not so easy a matter as he had imagined. At length he hit upon one which he believed would do the business effectually. He proposed to go to the East Indies, to dethrone half a dozen Rajahs, cut the throats of

half a million of their subjects, and come home with three or four hundred thousand pounds in his pocket. This project pleased him mightily for some time, till he began to reflect on the great distance of the East Indies, the danger of his being drowned in going or returning, and the still greater danger of being damned, if he destroyed so many of his fellow-creatures, to enrich himself; which made him give up all thoughts of becoming a Nabob. The next scheme Sir Thomas formed for the payment of his debts pleased him better, as it was not attended with so much danger either to his soul or body. When he was about fifty years of age, he came to a resolution to marry some beautiful young lady, of an honourable ancient family, with a prodigious fortune, that would enable him to pay all his debts, and execute all his projects. He spent several years in searching for such a lady, and at length fixed on Miss Betty Plum. It is true, Miss Betty was neither young nor handsome, and her grandfather had been a cobler, but she had a great fortune; and after a violent struggle between poverty and pride, he resolved to stoop and make his addresses. But while he was meditating on the most effectual method of doing this, he received the unwelcome news, that his intended bride had married an Irish fortune-hunter. My cousin behaved very much like a gentleman on this occasion. He called Miss Betty all the bad names he had ever heard, cursed the whole sex, and forswore matrimony for ever.

'While Sir Thomas was forming schemes for the payment of his debts, he was not unmindful of his old castle, and got many plans, some for repairing, and some for re-building it, for draining the morass, and laying it into a lawn, with gardens, orchards, walks, vistas, &c. But at last he found that this would be more expensive than building a new seat in

the modern taste; and he very wisely determined to build a most elegant convenient mansion, for the future residence of his family. But he as wisely resolved not to lay one stone, till he had found the most healthy, pleasant and commodious spot in his whole estate. Many a long day did he wander in search for this spot, but never could find one to his mind. One was too high, another too low; one too damp, another too dry; the prospect from one was too confined, from another too extensive.

'Sir Thomas never forgot the improvement of his farms. That was his favourite taste and study. He chose the most proper places for building substantial convenient farm-houses; he traced and marked the line of all the hedges, ditches and walls, that would be necessary for inclosing his fields, gardens, and orchards; he carefully examined the soil of every field, and settled the methods of cultivation that would be most proper for each, to bring it to the highest possible degree of fertility: in this he was much assisted by the painful perusal of several excellent systems of agriculture, composed in the garrets of Grub street. When he had got all in readiness, he assembled his tenants in the great hall of his castle, laid his plans before them, and in a long elaborate discourse, explained how they were to be carried into execution, concluding with a demand of two-guineas a-year of rent for every acre. This harangue, particularly the concluding sentence, produced various strong emotions in the audience. Some grinned, others groaned: some laughed, others cried; some cursed, others prayed; but all declared that they would not give one farthing more rent, nor change their methods of husbandry in the least. Sir Thomas was greatly enraged at the obstinacy of his tenants, and discharged a dreadful volley of oaths and threats upon them; but when his passion subsid-

ed, and he began to reflect that they were all his own clan, descended from the younger brothers and bastards of the family, he could not find in his heart to turn any of them out of their farms.

'My cousin was equally industrious, and as unsuccessful, in his schemes for cultivating the moors. For when he had by long thought and study, formed one of the most beautiful plans in the world for that purpose, he never could find any person who would execute any part of it.

'But still the planting of his hills promised every thing. By long and laborious investigations he found, that they would admit ten millions of trees, and that those trees, when forty years old, would be worth ten millions sterling, which would make him the richest subject in Europe. Transported with joy at this prospect, he determined to lose no time. He actually collected ten bushels of beech-mast, and an equal quantity of acorns, and wanted nothing but a proper place for a nursery, to begin his operations; but staying abroad too late, one evening in April, in search of such a place, he got a violent cold, which threw him into a fever, of which he died, in the seventy-fifth year of his age, in the same tattered bed and ruinous castle in which he was born; his debts unpaid, his morass undrained, his farms unimproved, his moors uncultivated, and his hills unplanted.

'With a heavy heart, I attended the precious remains of my dear cousin to his grave, and saw a stone laid upon it with this inscription:

"Hic jacet
Illustrisimus Dominus Thomas Lounger,
de Loiterhall, Baronettus.
Dum vixit,
Multa proposuit,
Nihil perfecit.
Secundum morem
Loungeriorum."

I am, &c. L. L.

N° 12. SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 1785.

Hippocrates——*in his Chapter of Hats.*
MOCK DOCTOR.

It has often been remarked, that men are apt to display more of their real character in circumstances apparently slight and unimportant, than in the greater and more momentuous actions of life. Our behaviour, or even the remark we may drop upon some seemingly trifling occurrence, will often strongly denote the real complexion of our mind; and it is upon this account that we admire so much the happy talent of those writers who, by a well-chosen circumstance, contrive at once to paint and make us acquainted with the character of the persons whom they wish to describe.

The great passions which actuate men in the pursuits of life, present little diversity of features to afford any just discrimination of character. Besides, in conducting the pursuits to which these passions incite, men are taught to be upon their guard: they are restrained by the customs and opinions of the world, and, under a kind of disguise, are constantly acting an artificial part. But in the more trifling circumstances of manner and behaviour, and in the more ordinary occurrences of life, which tend to no particular object, and in which therefore men are less upon their guard, the disguise is forgot to be assumed, and we give way to the natural cast of our mind and disposition. It is there we are apt to

betray those peculiar features of character, and those often nice shades of distinction, that difference and discriminate us from one another.

I have often amused myself with thinking, that, even in what may be deemed very slight circumstances of outward deportment and manner, I could distinctly trace something of the peculiar character of the man. There are particulars in our ordinary demeanour and appearance which are more connected with our turn of mind than we are apt to suspect, and more especially when they are such as from constant and daily repetition necessarily become familiar to us. I remember that a friend of mine, who was a great observer of those smaller traits which escaped others, assured me, that in the circle of his acquaintance he could, in the pace and manner of walking of each, mark out something which indicated its arising from the particular temper and disposition of the man. Nay, even where the manner of walking was the result, not of nature, but of affectation, he used to say, he could thence also discover the character; and that, independent of the meanness of affectation in so frivolous a circumstance, we might be certain that the affected pace was assumed to give the appearance of some quality which the person wished to possess, and knew himself to want. "La gravité," says Rouchefoucault, 'est un mystere du corps, inventé pour cacher les 'defauts de l'esprit.' In confirmation of this, I remember that I once knew a noble Lord who affected on all occasions a very slow and solemn pace, walking even across the room, or from one room to another, with all the leisurely solemnity of an usher at a funeral; but no one had sat at table with his Lordship for a single hour, without being sufficiently convinced from his coarse jokes, and horse-laugh, that real dignity was no feature of his mind, and that he wished

to supply the want, by what he fancied a very dignified gait, and manner of walking.

I happened, not long since, to be at an election dinner, where, as is usually the case, the company was very numerous, very noisy, and very dull. In taking our places at the table, I chanced unfortunately, to be separated from some friends whom I had wished to sit by; and finding none near me from whose conversation I could derive much entertainment, I was left to amuse myself with my own reflections on the crowd, and noise, and confusion which surrounded me. I happened at last to cast my eyes upon the opposite side of the room, where I perceived that every one seated in that row had hung up his hat on the wall behind him. Upon surveying those hats, and remarking that each had something particular, which, to an attentive observer, distinguished it from its neighbour, I began next to indulge my imagination, in fitting the hat to the head of its owner, and trying, if the distinguished figure of each hat did not correspond with something in the manner and character of the person to whom it appertained.

From the military hat and the navy hat, I could learn nothing; these, like their owners, being too much under regulation and diseipline, to admit of any diversity. It was amongst the other hats only that I could expect a field for observation. The first which attracted my attention was a new and glossy hat, made up and cocked in the very extremity of the fashion. Had it been graced with a cockade, I should have proceeded to the next; but wanting that, I looked below to find out the owner, and soon discovered that it could belong to none but a young barister, who is less studious of his brief than of being thought a man of fashion, above the pedantry of his profession, and I think is very likely

to attain his wish. The next hat was just the reverse of the former. It was of a form and cock that has been out of date these ten years, and yet withal it seemed new. Close below it, I discerned the careful owner, who, for fear of accidents, had cautiously placed himself near. He is rich and penurious; and by the most wretched saving has amassed a fortune. Contiguous to these hung a hat which appeared to have suffered more by negligence than by age. It seemed to have been intended to be moderately fashionable; but from the inattention of its owner, had its air and form a good deal impaired. It was the property of a learned philosopher, who sat not far distant, and who is too much absorded in abstract speculation, to give attention to circumstances of dress. Not far distant hung a hat seemingly fresh and new, excepting in its front angle, where the cock was so squeezed, compressed, and crumpled, as sufficiently to denote its very familiar acquaintance with the hand of its owner. I had no difficulty in appropriating it. Its master is the most complaisant man in town, knows every body, is constantly in the street, and in places of public resort, and bows with the most respectful attention to every one he meets. Near this last was a hat which for some time puzzled me what to make of it. It was neither new nor old; it was neither much in nor much out of the fashion; and seemed to be a strange mixture between the old fashion and the new, with a kind of studied endeavour to be most of the latter. After some time, I believe I hit upon its owner. He is a gentleman who wishes to be of the fashion as far as his affection to his money, which is the stronger principle with him, will permit; and his whole life is a warfare between his vanity and his avarice.

On the next peg was stuck a round riding-hat,

with a broad brim flapp'd down, and a double hat-band, which however, instead of surrounding at the proper place, had started, like the hoops of a staved cask, and was seen loose upon its top; it was covered partly with powder, and partly with dirt, half brushed, and had several little cuts on the crown. I easily discovered the owner, though his place was a good way off; a tall sout looking young man, who sat near the bottom of the table, with his arm thrown negligently over the back of his own chair, and his leg, on which was a rumpled boot, resting on the cross-bar of the chair next him; from which attitude he was only moved by our toast-master's frequent calls for a bumper, which command he very religiously obeyed. I was too distant to profit by his conversation, of which however he seemed very sparing, being of that order of *Bucks* who have been taught to drink long before they have learned to speak.

After this there was a blank, the peg immediately abjoining being occupied by no hat whatever. On looking below I discovered the person whose hat should have filled it. He was dressed in a shining suit, his waistcoat splendidly embroidered, at the breast of which appeared a quantity of rich laced ruffle. He sat erect in his chair, and seemed moved by no intrusive idea, except when sometimes he shrunk with fear, if perchance a bottle tripped on the joinings of the table, or a glass was spilled by an awkward neighbour. His hat was only a bit of black silk, of which I discovered the corner sticking out of his pocket, his foretop being too nicely dressed to admit of any covering. But I believe I suffered nothing from the want of any distinguishing mark of his character or disposition. The man is in reality nothing; 'tis his coat only that makes a figure in the world. As for emotions, passions,

virtue or knowledge, he puts them, like his hat, into his pocket.

After this survey, at which perhaps, some of my readers will smile, I amused myself with considering how in this slight particular of dress we may be apt to discover our character, and even upon the bit of beaver with which we cover our heads, to stamp somewhat of the image of our minds. I was pleased with thinking, that however men may wrap themselves up in artificial disguise in the greater actions of life; yet even amidst all their concealments, there are circumstances to be found where nature will discover itself, and by which an attentive and diligent observer may be able to read the real character of the man.

I have often thought of discovering amongst the ladies some circumstance which might lead me to distinguish their characters in the same way that the hat discriminates those of the gentleman. But I found them so little free agents in this matter, so much the uniform creation of milliners and hair-dressers, that it was impossible to trace any characteristical mark about them. All my efforts, therefore have hitherto been baffled; and I was about to have abandoned the thing as impossible, till a Lady who has lived much in the world, to whom I mentioned my difficulty, very lately assured me, that she can furnish me with a pretty remarkable particular which will perfectly answer the purpose, and that she will impart to me a set of observations which she herself has made, to confirm the certainty of the test. When she is pleased to favour me with these, they shall be communicated to my readers.

N° 13. SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR,

I INHERITED from my ancestors an estate of about £1000 a-year; and as I never had any desire for figuring in the world, I married, early in life, the daughter of a neighbouring gentleman, and till of late years lived at home, satisfied with the society of my friends and neighbours. I found my fortune fully sufficient for my purposes; and was in hopes that I might provide decently for my younger children, who are four in number, without its being necessary to part with an estate, which, as it had been some centuries in our family, I had an old-fashioned inclination to preserve in it.

I am sorry, however, to add, that from the circumstances I am now to take the liberty of mentioning, those hopes have given way to prospects of a very different kind, prospects unspeakably mortifying to me, and which ought to be still more distressing to the rest of my family.

My eldest son, as he possessed but a very limited genius, and shewed no propensity to any particular profession, I wished to follow my own example, and become a country gentleman. But a winter in your city, after having passed a few years at one of our universities, taught him that this was a plan quite unfit for a young man of spirit. As he had there acquired a taste for what he was pleased to call genteel life, by hunting, drinking, wenching, and

gambling with all the idle young men about town, at a greater expence than what supported all the rest of the family at home, I was persuaded to purchase for him a cornetcy of horse, in compliance with his own earnest desire, and in hopes that, by a removal from his present companions, he might learn to retrench his expences, and be gradually reclaimed from the dangerous habits he had contracted in their society.

While my son was thus learning to be a Gentleman, my wife thought it less necessary that my daughters should learn to be ladies.

Accordingly, when the eldest was about thirteen, and the other about twelve years of age, they both left my house in the country, and were placed in a boarding-school of the first reputation in Edinburgh.

At home they had passed their time, as I imagined usefully, in learning to read, to write, to work, to keep accounts, and to assist their mother in the little cares of our household. They had been taught to dance; and they sung, not perhaps with much art or skill, but in such a manner as most people listened to with pleasure. These attainments, however, were of a very inferior kind to what it was now thought necessary they should acquire. They were quickly provided with masters for all the polite and fashionable branches of education. They were taught dancing (for they would not allow what they had learned in the country to deserve that name), drawing, French, Italian, and music; and a female relation, who was kind enough to take some charge of them, sent us the most flattering accounts of their progress in those various accomplishments.

When I received the bills of the boarding-mistress, even for the first season, I was, I must confess, somewhat out of humour; and it required all the eloquence of my wife, and the flattering accounts

of her kinswoman, to persuade me that the expence was quite so well bestowed as they seemed to imagine. It was, however, a trifle, compared to that which followed. In a few years my young misses were transformed into young ladies; and as the kindness of our female friend procured them an introduction, as she told us to all the genteel families in town, what between private parties and public places, where they now began to figure, they very seldom found leisure to be at home. The expence which this occasioned, added to that of their education, (for they still continued to improve themselves), was such as I could by no means afford to bestow on two members of my family; especially as it now became necessary to fit my two younger boys for the professions they chose to follow; Jack, the elder, being destined for the bar, and Bob for the East Indies, where, under the protection of an uncle, it was hoped he might one day become a Nabob.

The beauty and accomplishments of my daughters had now become a favourite topic with my wife and other friends of my family; and to have buried them in a country retirement, would have been deemed the height of folly and barbarity. For their sakes, therefore, as well as the education of my sons, I was now told it was absolutely necessary we should pass a considerable part of the year in Edinburgh. The separate board I must otherwise bestow on my boys and girls, was supposed to render this a plan of œconomy; and the few objections I made to it were silenced, by telling me of many gentlemen, from all parts of the country, who had found this the only method of giving their children a genteel education, without the absolute ruin of their fortunes.

To these reasons, though not altogether satisfied, I gave way. We provided ourselves with a house in

town; and, for these five years past, have spent our winters in Edinburgh, and only retired to the country, like other fashionable people, at the end of the season, when it becomes necessary that one part of the family should provide health, and another money, for the gaiety of the next.

During this period I have witnessed the full effect of that fashionable education I had bestowed on my daughters; and it is now some years that they have joined to the other pleasures of a town-life, the envied distinction of Beauties and Toasts.

You will easily conceive how much this must have gratified the vanity of a mother. My own, Sir, was not altogether proof against it; nor can I deny the pleasure it gave me, to find the company of my daughters universally sought after, and to see their beauty attract all eyes, in every company, and at every public place in which they appeared. I soon, however, found the effects of this distinction to be very different from those which the sanguine expectations of some of us had suggested. Our house indeed was filled with visitors in the morning, and in the evening my girls were attended at public places by many of the gay young men of rank and fortune. But the fashion of beauties is scarce more lasting than that of the dress they wear. The admiration which my daughters for some time attracted, now sensibly declines; and, amidst the crowd of admirers which turned their heads, I do not find there has been one whose admiration led to any other consequence, than that of gratifying his own vanity, and feeding theirs by a temporary homage to their fashion and their beauty. My poor girls, meanwhile, have contracted a habit of living, and a turn of thinking, which will prevent any sensible man of their own station from thinking of them as companions for life;

and which, I fear, would ill qualify them for such a situation, if it should be offered them, or if their own vanity could allow them to stoop to it.

Jack has been now some time at the bar, and at first gave hopes of such application as would probably have ensured success. But he has not been proof against the vanity of keeping that fashionable company to which the situation of my family gave him access; and now spends his time in a continued circle of idleness and expence, with such young men of fortune as think it an honour done him to admit him of their parties, and will despise him, perhaps too justly, when he can no longer afford to partake of them.

My eldest son, far from profiting by his military plans, has retained the same taste of life which gave rise to them. Besides advancing the price of two commissions, I have repeatedly discharged debts which he is pleased to call debts of honour. After all, he is now obliged to sell out of the army, and end where he should have begun, in the life of a country-gentleman, with the advantage of having contracted a thorough distaste for it; of having thrown away, in a round of fashionable vice and extravagance, the plain talents, the honest sentiments, and the sober dispositions, that qualify men for a station which they are too apt to despise.

The profusion of this thoughtless boy, added to the expences of my family, has consumed the savings of my happier years; and not only disabled me from continuing our present style of life, but obliged me to dispose of a considerable part of my estate, and leaves it very uncertain what residue I shall be able to preserve for my own support, and for the provision of my family.

Thus, in place of those flattering hopes we had once formed, my wife and I, now in the decline of life, have before us the melancholy prospect of leav-

ing, as companions for each other, a bankrupt gambler, living embarrassed and distressed on the shattered remains of a fortune; and two neglected beauties, paying, I am afraid, much too dear for the pleasure they once derived from that envied distinction; while the most promising of our younger sons has fallen a prey to the same fashionable folly and extravagance; and the whole hopes of a once-flourishing family are left to depend on the doubtful success of an Eastern adventurer.

Such, Sir, are the consequences of that preposterous fashion which leads men of moderate fortunes to give their children an education and taste of life altogether unsuited to the situations they are likely to occupy.

Even to those whose fortunes enable them to move in the sphere of fashionable dissipation and expence, the real pleasures and privileges of their situation are much less considerable than they are commonly imagined; but to men of more limited circumstances, an attempt to rise into that region of extravagance is fatal indeed; it leads them from the moderate station where every happiness was to be found, and abandons them to want embittered by discontent, and to distresses heightened by self-reproach.

AGRESTIS.

L

N° 14. SATURDAY, MAY 7, 1785.

THEY who live in the bustle of the world, are not perhaps the best or most accurate observers of the progressive change of manners in that society in

which they pass their time. In such a situation we adopt the modes and manners of those with whom we live, with so much ease and facility, that any change is hardly perceptible, or if perceived, leaves but a slight impression. Like the alteration produced by time upon the human form, though we know that there is a constant change, we do not observe it in those with whom we are daily accustomed to associate. A stranger in a foreign land sees many beauties, and discovers many deformities, which escape the eye of a native. To the stranger every object is new; it strikes his imagination, it calls forth his attention, and he views and considers it in all its various lights. In judging indeed of what he sees, his natural prejudices may be apt to mislead him; he may suppose defects where in truth there are none, and he may exaggerate slight imperfections into capital faults.

A person who, after living a number of years in retirement returns again into society, is somewhat in the situation of the foreigner. Like him, he is apt to be misled by prejudices; but, like him too, he remarks many things which escape the observation of those whose sensations are blunted by habit, and whose attention is less awake to the objects around them.

It was this that afforded me so much amusement in the conversation of my new acquaintance Colonel Caustic, of which I gave my readers some account in a former paper. Like the Sleepers, when they entered the city of Ephesus, Colonel Caustic, on coming to Edinburgh after forty years residence in the country, found a total change in the appearance, in the dress, the manners, and the customs of its inhabitants. Every man, perhaps, at an advanced age, is more or less, a *laudator temporis acti*, and naturally feels a predilection for those happy days when novelty added to the charms of life, and gave a zest to every

enjoyment. If to this natural feeling be joined any particular cause of disgust; if, like Colonel Caustic, a man has been driven from society by any particular disappointment or misfortune; if in silence and in solitude he has suffered his distresses to prey upon his mind; if he has fondly brooded over them for a long course of years; he must indeed be endowed by nature with a more than common share of philanthropy, to be able to come back into the world without discovering marks of sourness and chagrin.

To those causes must be ascribed the severity of my friend Caustic's observations. All his natural good sense and benevolence of disposition could not prevent him from being hurt and affected by a thousand little improprieties which he perceived, or fancied that he perceived.

But I had some time ago an opportunity of seeing my friend Caustic in a situation where, it must be owned, there was some reason for severity of remark. In a former paper, I mentioned the pleasure I received from attending him to the theatre. As we were waiting in the passage till we could get chairs, we found Mr. B——, a cotemporary of Caustic's, waiting for his carriage. Mr. B. expressed much satisfaction at seeing his old acquaintance; and after a gentle reproof on the score of visiting, he begged that Caustic and I would do him the honour to dine with him, *sans facon*, that day week. Caustic, after stealing a look at me, accepted of the invitation; and I, at the same time, agreed to be of the party. When Mr. B. left us, Caustic, who had not seen him for many years, asked me some questions with regard to his situation in life. 'Why,' replied I, 'he has become very rich, and it is his chief wish that his friends should enjoy his wealth. He lives *en Prince*, as you will see.'—'When I knew him,' said Caustic, 'he was poor enough; but though a

little vain now and then, he was upon the whole a good well disposed man.'

Upon the day appointed, I attended Caustic to Mr. B.'s. We went precisely at four o'clock, which he had informed us was his hour. Upon entering the house, I found the servants waiting in the hall, dressed out in their laced liveries, with a look of insolent importance in their faces; and there was an air of preparation in every thing we saw, from the gilded knockers at the gate to the Gobelins tapestry in the drawing room. Soon after we entered the room, the servant announced Lady ——. Upon hearing her name, Caustic started from his chair with an uncommon degree of satisfaction in his countenance. Lady —— was a beauty of the last age, when Caustic was a gay and fashionable man about town. In the height of her beauty, she had retired from the world to dedicate her time to the education of her children. At the age of sixty-five, she still retains an eye expressive of that tempered vivacity, that animated benignity and goodness, which equally attracts our regard and commands our respect. In every thing she says, she discovers a sound understanding, accompanied with a most engaging cheerfulness of disposition, not abated by age, and perhaps rather heightened by the pleasing reflection on a life spent in the uniform practice of every virtue. Lady —— and Caustic had not met for many years. It was with pleasure I saw the respectful, yet affectionate manner with which my friend now addressed her, and the kind affability with which she on her part received his compliments.

The conversation soon turned upon the improvements of this city. Mr. B. spoke with much fluency on this subject; and, addressing himself to Caustic, observed, that formerly Edinburgh was in a manner uninhabitable; that thirty years ago there was not a

house fit for a gentleman to live in; that the pleasures of society were then unknown: and that we now only begin to know how to live. Caustic admitted, that as a *town* Edinburgh no doubt was improved: 'But you must forgive me,' added he, 'for doubting if the society of Edinburgh has improved in an equal degree.' 'Unquestionably it has,' said Mr. B. 'You must remember the time when there was not a dinner to be had in any house in town; when the men passed their whole time in taverns, and the women were left alone, to amuse themselves as they best could.' 'There is some truth in the observation,' said Lady ——; 'but yet, upon the whole, those were not bad times.' 'I agree with your Ladyship,' said Colonel Caustic. 'It is true we did not then inhabit palaces, and we seldom saw those sumptuous entertainments, where one sits, between *etiquette* and *ennui*, labouring through two courses and a dessert, as I had the misfortune to do but yesterday, placed between a lady who did not chuse to say any thing, and a gentleman who spoke of nothing but the excellence of the cook, and who, in the fulness of his heart, communicated to me a new mode of dressing *currie*, which he had just received from a friend high in office at Calcutta, by the last express over land.' 'For my part,' added the Colonel, 'I would not exchange an hour passed in the society I have had the honour to see assembled in your Ladyship's drawing-room, for twenty such dinners. There a conversation, at once gay and polite, afforded the highest entertainment of which a rational creature is capable. There I have seen a *Hume* trifling with the beautiful and the young, and at the same time communicating knowledge and instruction in a manner the most pleasing, simple, and unaffected. There I have seen a *Hamilton*

submitting his verses to the correction and criticism of a fair circle, who did not trust alone to beauty the most superior for the preservation of their empire over mankind. There I have seen'——' Hold, hold, my good friend, said Lady ——, if you run on at this rate, those ladies (bowing to two young ladies who sat opposite to her) will think you as unreasonably partial to your old friends, as unjust in your estimate of modern manners.' Here the conversation was interrupted by the arrival of some additional guests, among whom there was an old gentleman, who, notwithstanding his age, seemed to possess a great flow of animal spirits, and who addressed every person in company with the same undistinguishing familiarity, and vulgar coarseness of manner. Caustic looked at Lady —— with an air of triumph.

Our entertainer now began to discover symptoms of uneasiness. He had more than once informed us that the Countess of ——, Lord C., Sir W. D. and several other persons of fashion, were to be of the party, not one of whom had hitherto appeared, although it was long past the hour of dinner. At length our ears were assailed with a loud noise in the stair-case, and the door opening, Lord C., Sir W. D. and two other young men, rushed into the room with their hair uncombed, and in every respect in the most complete dishabille. Without paying the least attention to any one person in company, they began to tell us of the excellent sport they had that morning enjoyed at a cock-fight.

But this recital was cut short by the servant's announcing the Countess of ——; who, without the smallest apology for waking the company wait dinner for near two hours, walked up to a large mirror at one end of the room, and, adjusting a curl, asked Lord C. what made him leave D——'s so soon last

night? 'We had a charming party, and did not sup till two this morning. Before supper I won 50 from D—— at Piquette: but I believe I had the advantage of him; for he had rather drank too much wine with you at dinner.' 'Your son was of the party,' added she, turning to the old gentleman; 'I got some of his money too. But what has become of him; he promised to meet me here to-day.'—'O the graceless dog! I know nothing of him.' At that instant the young man entered the room, and we were immediately called to dinner. At table, Lady —— contrived to place her friend Caustic next to her; and they were so much engrossed with their own conversation, that they paid little attention to that of the company, which was carried on by the Countess and her fashionable friends in the same strain in which it had begun. Mr. B. was busied in displaying the elegance of the entertainment, and was particularly solicitous to call Caustic's attention to it. 'How do you like my champaigne?' 'I am no connoisseur; I seldom drink champaigne,' said Caustic dryly. 'It is damn'd good,' said Lord C.; 'it is as good as we used to drink with our ambassador at Paris last year. I was sent thither by my father to learn to speak French; but I spent my time to much better purpose. I was admitted a member of the cricket-club, and kept no other company.' 'I did not know,' said I, 'that cricket had been known in France.' 'Neither is it among your French fellows; they have not genius for it. Our club was to a man all *Anglois*, as they called us. At first the French were confoundedly surprised to see us on the plains of Sablons, playing with our servants, all stripped to the buff.'

After much conversation, equally edifying, the ladies at length retired, and the master of the feast

began to push the bottle briskly about. The old gentleman seemed to be particularly pleased with this; and his son enjoyed it no less. The father told us anecdotes of his son's debaucheries, and the son amused us with stories of his father's licentiousness. Caustic was shocked to the last degree at this exhibition. He made a signal to me, that he wished to retire. Before we could accomplish that, the old man got hold of the bottle, and, filling a bumper, asked leave to give a toast, and then roared out a sentiment, as he called it, in terms most shockingly gross and indecent. 'Well done, my old boy!' exclaimed the son;—'here goes in a bumper; and may we all, at your age, be as jolly and as wicked as you are.'

Caustic could endure this no longer; he quitted the company, and I followed him. When we were alone, he asked me if such scenes were common among us? 'If this,' said he, 'be the improvement and the refinement of which our friend B—— talked so much, I hope I have done with it. Folly and impertinence may be submitted to; but the profligacy of that old man provoked me beyond measure. We need not wonder at the degeneracy of the times, if a father is to teach debauchery to his own children, and by precept and example to encourage their progress in vice. For my part,' added he, 'I consider this as a species of parricide, (if we may apply the word to a father's crime,) for which no punishment is too severe.

E

N° 15. SATURDAY, MAY 14, 1785.

THOUGH I would seldom chuse to venture on any subject so purely scientific as that which I propose for the paper to-day; yet as I have a great respect for the very learned and curious correspondent from whom the following letter was received, I cannot resist my inclination to communicate it entire to my readers.

DEAR SIR, *Madrid, 27th Feb.* 1785.

I have been at all possible pains to discover by means of those philosophers and travellers here who are best acquainted with Africa, whether any traces still remain of that species of men of whom your learned countryman has taken notice, mentioned by Agathorchides and Sir Francis Drake, called the Ακριδοφαγοι, Grasshopper-eaters, or, as I incline to render the word Locust-eaters: but hitherto my inquiries have met with no degree of success. Though unsuccessful, they have not, however, been unproductive; as, in the course of my search after that species, I have met with very well-authenticated relations of another variety of the human kind, still extant in that country, which I think has not been taken notice of by either of the above-mentioned authors, unless you suppose it to be the same with that of the Ακριδοφαγοι above-mentioned, or perhaps with the Ιχθυοφαγοι, or Fish-eaters, recorded also by Agatharchides, and copied from him by Diodorus, and some other later writers. The variety I mean is that of the Φυσαλοφαγοι, or Toad-eaters; of which I proceed to give you a particular account, which

have been, happily, not only enabled to collect from the report of some voyagers who had visited their country, but have actually had an opportunity of examining one myself, which is now in the possession of that illustrious and munificent patron of the arts, Don Gabriel de Crapolino, who had him from a learned priest of the order of Jesus, several years a missionary in Africa, whose account also makes up a considerable part of my relation.

The Phusalophagos or Toad-eater, though found in different degrees of latitude, is a native of warm climates only, and seems to be of the migrating kind, who change their residence according to the difference of times and seasons. In his original state, he appears, as indeed it is highly probable all savages are, inclined to creep or walk on all fours; and the habit of walking erect or straight is only an acquired one, which seems uneasy to him; and therefore he takes every opportunity of returning to his former grovelling or bending posture. Indeed, from some anatomical observations, which the above-mentioned learned Jesuit had an opportunity of making on the body of one who had died, it appears that Nature has fitted them more for this posture than for any other. The muscle called by anatomists *biceps-cruris*, by which the leg is bent, appeared to have been much enlarged by constant use; whereas the *longissimus dorsi*, by which the back is kept straight and erect, was of no strength at all. The elevators also of the upper eye-lid, called by some anatomists the *musculi admirationis*, were capable of great extension, and seemed to have been in constant use, which may be likewise accounted for from the prone position of the body, natural to this species. The width of the throat or swallow was also remarkable, with which Nature undoubtedly provided them, in

consideration of the kind of food on which they subsist.

His forehead, like that of the natives of Aracan, was flat and large, and probably had been made so by an operation similiar to what the inhabitants of that country practise on their children, to wit, by pressing a plate of lead on their foreheads immediately after their birth. For in that one dissected by the missionary, the *os frontis* was exceedingly thick and hard, and seemed capable of sustaining very great violence without any material impression.

Like the inhabitants of the Friendly Isles, they use a liquor made of the spittle of others, called by our late circumnavigators cava, which the Phusalophagi swallow either in its natural state, or, like the Otaheiteans, in a state of fermentation. Indeed, they do not at all resemble the Icthuophagi, or Fish-eaters, in the circumstance of living entirely without drink, as they seem, on the contrary, very much inclined to drinking: like the Fish-eaters, however, (as Diodorus reports them,) it must be confessed, they have very little sense of the το καλον, or the το πρεπον, the beautiful or the decent. One instance of this the learned Father gave me, that, as far as he was informed or could perceive, they had no objection (as indeed is the custom among several other savage nations) to an union with a female who had formerly had an illicit intercourse with the other sex; but, on the contrary, like the Tartars, and Tongusians, often preferred such to all others.

The agility of this species, like that of the Acridophagi, is amazing. That one whom I saw in the possession of the noble person abovementioned, would skip over chairs and tables, at a signal given, with the most amazing alertness. In this they resemble a good deal the monkey tribe, as well as in their

faculty of imitation, in which my informer told me they excel in a very wonderful degree. Their strength, likewise, the missionary reports to be very uncommon. He says, he has seen some of them bear to be loaded with burdens that would have wearied a porter at Bassora.

This one had learned the use of speech, though not to a very high degree of perfection, and indeed his natural propensity seemed to be rather to listen: yet with that inclination to silence which is common to man in a savage state, he did not seem to have the melancholy cast of either the Orang Outang, or the other varieties of uncultivated mankind; on the contrary, he had a mirthful disposition, or at least a facility of laughing and seeming merry, beyond any thing that could have been imagined of one in his situation.

He had, by the time I saw him, perfectly lost all inclination and relish for his former manner of living, and was by no means averse to the delicacies of refined cookery. His taste, however, was far from being acute, as at times he appeared highly to relish, and to be extremely fond of very indifferent fare, when it was set before him by his master. According to the missionary, his countrymen, like the Bedas of Ceylon, have a custom of seasoning every thing with honey, a practice which accordingly this particular one at Don Gabriel's still continued; and his Excellency, as well as some of his guests, assured me they found it very palatable.

Like his taste in this instance, his other senses appear to be subject to much uncertainty. His seeing and hearing are at some times remarkably acute; at others he seems hardly to possess those faculties at all. Like the Chacrelas, in the island of Java, his sight is generally much quicker in the night than the day-time; and the later the hour, it appears to be

the clearer and the more distinct. Like some other savages, he seems to delight in music; though his discrimination of sounds as might be expected, is not very nice. His patron, Don Gabriel, plays on the Viol de gamba but very indifferently; and yet he seems more pleased with the sound of this instrument, than with that of some others played by the ablest musicians of the King's opera.

The powers of his mind seem to be of a very limited sort. He does not, however, appear to be naturally so dull as some of his countrymen, of whose stupidity Charlevoix gives remarkable instances; who, according to his account, cannot count beyond the number 3. Though I never had occasion to try his conception of numbers in its utmost extent, I saw that he could very readily number the guests at Don Gabriel's table, who often greatly exceeded the above denomination, or even the dishes, which were still more numerous. He resembles those natives of Guinea more nearly in another particular; he, as Father Charlevoix tells us of them, seems very seldom to think spontaneously. In point of memory, however, he differs widely from those natives of Guinea, of which faculty he seems endowed with a wonderful proportion. When he had learned enough of the Spanish to be able to hold a conversation easily, he gave many instances of a memory exceedingly tenacious, and often remembered things which had happened to Don Gabriel, or which Don Gabriel related, though nobody else had the most distant recollection of them.

Nor was he more distinguished from that species mentioned by Charlevoix in memory, than in patience and temper. 'Though possessed of little genius,' says that traveller, 'these Guinea negroes are extremely acute in their feelings. According to the manner in which they are treated, they are lively or

melancholy, laborious or slothful, friendly or hostile. When well fed and not ill treated, they are contented, cheerful, and ready for every employment; but when ill used and oppressed, they grow sullen, and often die of melancholy. Of injuries, as well as of benefits, they are extremely sensible; and against those who injure them they bear a most implacable hatred.' The very reverse of all this seems to be the temperament of the Phusalophagos. He is extremely patient under harsh usage, insensible to injuries, and is equally cheerful and ready for any employment when ill as when well treated, with the exception, however, of good feeding, which seems necessary to him in common with the Guinea men.

I have thus, my very worthy and respected Sir, endeavoured to give you as particular a description of the distinguishing characteristics of this species, as the accounts I could rely on, or my own observation could furnish me with. But as I know how far short any recital, how copious or exact soever, falls of an actual examination, I am not without hopes of being able to afford you an opportunity of examining a specimen of the Phusalophagi yourself, by means of some of our merchants who have opportunities of correspondence with Africa. But as the keeping of one, I am informed by Don Gabriel's maitre d'hotel, is somewhat expensive, you will be kind enough to inform me in your next, whether there is any individual naturalist who would be desirous of such a present; if your acquaintance does not furnish such a person, it may be as well that I send him, not to enrich any private collection, but to the President or Vice-president of the Royal or Antiquarian Society.

I am, &c.

Z W. C.

N° 16. SATURDAY, MAY 21, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR,

YOUR correspondent Mrs. Careful has given a very just picture of the Female Loungers, in her entertaining letter. The disturbance which the morning visits of those idlers give to sober families, is become matter of very serious concern to many a mother in this town, who would wish to educate their daughters in such a way as to qualify them for performing their parts with propriety, in whatever rank they may be called to.

Idleness and frivolity seem to form the character of the times. According to the present system of female education amongst us, the culture of the mind and heart, the knowledge of those useful duties which a good wife and a good mother owes to her husband and her children, are but slightly attended to, if not altogether neglected, for those exterior accomplishments which ought properly to be the handmaids of the former. Hence the dissipation of individuals, and the final wreck we often see of families!

The task I am going upon is a melancholy one; to illustrate the truth of the above observation from my own woeful experience; yet, as it may be a caution to others, I think it a duty on me to communicate to you the following narrative.

I was married, a few years ago, to an amiable young woman, the only daughter of a wealthy and respectable merchant. My father-in-law, Mr Lum-

ber, had gone early to the West Indies, where he was so successful in trade as to make a very considerable fortune, with which he returned to settle in his own country. As he had raised himself, and had few relations, to supply that want, he married a daughter of the Honourable Mr. Stingy, younger brother to the Earl of Loftus, by which connection he at once acquired relationship with a score of Honourable and Right Honourable cousins, some of whom did him the honour to breakfast, dine, or sup with him almost every day.

Mr. Lumber was a sensible man in his way, and had seen a good deal of the world; he might therefore have managed his family in a manner much more to its advantage than that in which it was conducted, had he been allowed the perfect guidance of it. But in this he was a good deal restrained, from the circumstance of his inferior birth. It was impossible for the son of a plain citizen to understand any thing so well as the grand-daughter of a Peer. He was contented, therefore, to maintain a sort of divided empire: He was allowed to superintend the education of his two boys, who after having been some time in a respectable house in Holland, now assist in carrying on the business in their father's counting-house. As to his daughter, he left her to the management of her mother, and of her aunt Miss Bridget Stingy, a maiden Lady, who lived in the family. As my grievances all took rise from that root, I must be indulged in mentioning the character of these ladies.

The circumstances of Mr. Stingy did not perhaps allow of giving his daughters the most liberal education; but what he might have given, he did not think it necessary to give: to be the daughters of the Honourable Mr. Stingy, and grand-daughters of the Earl of Loftus, was enough, without any other

endowment. Bred with high ideas of birth and rank, they were ignorant of almost every branch of useful knowledge; and as most of their time passed alternately amongst their quality relations, they had learned to despise taking any concern in the useful employments of domestic life.

On the death of the Honourable Mr. Stingy, Miss Bridget, his eldest daughter, was left to the care of her relations: but as they appeared rather cool with regard to her, she was, by the benignity of Mr. Lumber, brought home to his house, and to ease and plenty, if she could have used them with good humour and discretion.

This Lady was several years older than her sister Mrs. Lumber, a weak good-natured woman, over whom she assumed a superiority and direction more than was consistent with her situation, and which Mr. Lumber, though a good humoured man, did not at all times approve of. In place of making herself and her sister happy in the enjoyment of the real blessings which they possessed, Miss Stingy's chief study was, to teach her sister a number of wants to which she was not entitled as the wife of a merchant. To many of these Mr. Lumber gave way; such as, adding another servant to the table arrangement, who plied behind his Lady's chair in a plain suit and ruffles; changing the post-chaise into a body coach, and promoting Jack the driver to the rank of John, coachman. But, to the no small disquiet of Miss Bridget, Lumber was inflexible to his wife's demand of a weekly route and card assembly. This, and several other indulgences, she did not find Mr. Lumber silly enough to grant; but she generally found Mrs. Lumber silly enough to resent the refusal.

But, to end this digression, which I am afraid has already tired you, and to proceed to my own story.

——Mr. Lumber being my banker while I was abroad, on coming to Scotland, I was often invited to his house, where I was treated with great hospitality and attention. Miss Lucy Lumber, his only daughter, was young, handsome, good-natured, and sprightly. Her vivacity, her good-humour, and her good looks, attracted my attentions, and I thought I discovered that she was not displeased with them. I was in that situation in which the world suggests the propriety of a man's looking out for a wife, and in which he begins to think it his duty to be married. The qualities Miss Lumber possessed were attractive; and I never thought of those she might want. In short, I was in love: I courted; I was accepted of; and as every man in my situation would say, made completely happy.

After passing some weeks in a round of mirth and dissipation, I carried my Lucy, with a companion of hers, to my house in the north.

The visits of my neighbours, and our returns to them, with the little parties which we made, gave me but little opportunity for observation, or a thorough knowledge of my wife's qualities or turn of mind. She wanted not sense at bottom, had good nature, and, bating a little tincture of that pride of ancestry, or rather vanity, for it never was offensive, which had early been inculcated into her by her aunt Bridget, she had a sweetness and affability that was extremely engaging. We passed the summer very agreeably. When winter set in, I began to know more intimately my wife's disposition. I had presented her with a small selection of books for her closet; the best of the British Poets and Historians, some of moral entertainment, such, as, the Spectators, Guardians, &c. and some for mere amusement. But I soon found that my Lucy was no reader. She read Tom Jones, indeed: and on my recommenda-

tion to her and Miss Flounce, they went through the greatest part of Gil Blas; but of the two scholars of Salamanca, I am afraid they ranked with the first.

By the good management of an experienced housekeeper, who had been brought up in the family by my mother, and who, I knew, had a real liking to the family, my house, table, and domestics had been regulated. On my marriage, I was in hopes that, without entering into the executive part, my Lucy would now, as mistress of the family, superintend the whole domestic œconomy: but in this I was disappointed. She never had been used to look into household management; it was a province, she said she was not adapted for, and wished not to engage in. She would now and then quote maxims which I could perceive she had learned in the Loftus school. They signified, that household cares might become ordinary women, but were degrading to the descendants of people of quality.

When we were not engaged with company, my farm and planting, my dog and my gun, kept me a great part of the day in the field. When I returned, I did not always find from my wife that cheerful animated look that used to welcome me home. When at times I remarked this, she would suddenly resume a gaiety of countenance, and endeavour to smile away my observation. But as this gaiety was assumed, its continuance was short; and with great uneasiness I now began to see a change of disposition in my Lucy, and that a lowness of spirits at times hung upon her. This I attributed, however, to her situation, as to my great joy, she was, as my friend John Home expresses it, 'As women wish to be who love their Lords.'——Mr. Lumber had kindly invited us to town, and we determined to pass the winter with him. We were received with great joy,

and found that family much the same as we had left it.

My Lucy brought me a fine boy; and while she recovered her health, I flattered myself that she would soon also regain her former sprightliness and good humour. In this I was not disappointed; we got into the fashionable circle of company, and that continual round of dissipation that goes on in the metropolis: the whole forenoon generally spent amidst a succession of visitants, a mob of idlers; the rest of the day in dinners, public places, and evening parties.

Although in my own mind I despised the giddy restless insignificants that figured in this perpetual drama; yet as I considered myself as a passenger only for the time, I submitted to be carried along with the stream, and partook of the flying amusements as they occurred. I did not lose sight, however, of my own scheme: as the spring approached I gave hints of my return to Homely Castle, and announced the day for our departure. My Lucy, who never disputed my will, prepared herself; but I could observe that she became grave and thoughtful, as the time approached for our setting out. We left our friends, and got safely home.

The smiles of our little infant were for some time his mother's sole amusement; but this, as mere amusement, for it carried no active employment along with it, after some months began to lose its relish. The feeble exertions, which too late she endeavoured to call to her aid, were too weak to resist the demon of indolence, with Langour and Melancholy in his train, that now had invaded her. Such are the fruits of an education now, I am afraid, but too common! Good natural parts, in place of being trained to exercise, in the several branches of knowledge, and useful employments of life, had either

been neglected, or misapplied to frivolous and desultory amusements! Now, when out of the giddy round of the fashionable town entertainments that used to fill up her hours, my Lucy feels a vacant mind, that affords no resources within itself. Her reflections of course are painful and bitter; or if lulled at all, only sink into a lassitude, and listless unconcern for every thing around her. Her few former amusements, her tambour and harpsichord, have long become insipid; and even the smiles of her child, which used to give delight, now I can observe, force a sigh from her, and sometimes the tear will start into her eye, from the painful reflection, no doubt, of her inability to perform to him the duty of a mother.

In this situation, Mr. Lounger, judge of my distress and disappointment. Instead of family happiness and domestic enjoyment, I find at home a constant source of disquiet and melancholy. Perhaps I am more unhappy than husbands whose wives are more blameable. In the greater offences against the marriage duty, the injured party has the privilege of complaint, the support of resentment, the consolation of indifference, or of hatred. I have no contradiction of which to complain, no injuries to resent: I pity, nay I still love my wife; and yet I am most unhappy.

Tell my situation, Sir, to those young men, who like me——or rather tell it to mothers, who, like Mrs. Lumber, have daughters to educate. Remind them, that, however important the education may be that teaches to adorn the mistress, and captivate the lover, there is still another, and a higher, which requires some little attention;—that which instructs them to perform the duties of the wife, to retain the affections, and to constitute the happiness of the husband. I am, &c.

HORATIUS.

N° 17. SATURDAY, MAY 28, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR,

IF I am not misinformed, you have taken up the same sort of business which was formerly carried on by a Gentleman who published his performances under the title of the Mirror, with whom I had once or twice occasion, not very agreeable ones, to correspond. As I suppose you have got that Gentleman's good will, I am inclined to deal with you as his successor; and I trust you will use me as well as he did, by giving place to this letter, containing an account of grievances, which I know not where else to seek redress for. You will find my correspondence, though not elegant, at least authentic. The family of the Homespuns, though I say it who should not, were always to be trusted in a story; truth and plain-dealing was their motto, and I hope will continue so, if bad neighbours don't spoil them.

The neglect of the great Lady, which my daughter Elizabeth thought fit to complain of in the Mirror, was of singular use in my family. My young Lady came back to the country so quiet and so reasonable a girl, that her mother and I had not once occasion to chide her for a twelvemonth; at the end of which we had proposals of marriage for her from her uncle's partner, whom she mentions in the paper I allude to; and she consented to become the wife of a plain, virtuous, thriving young man, though he had nothing of finery or fashion about him. They

are as happy as can be, and have two stout cherry-cheeked boys, who, I am told, are the pictures of their grandfather.

The rest of us remain as we were; at least we did so till within these two months. My Lady —— made some overtures towards a renewal of our acquaintance about a twelvemonth ago: but it was agreed to decline them; and I staid at home to lay down a field of spring-wheat, instead of going to vote for a parliament-man. The waists of my wife and daughters had returned to their natural size, and the heads of the latter had moulted of their feathers. Their hoops were sent to the lumber-garret, and powder and pomatum were scarcely ever used but on Sundays. I fondly thought, that all the follies of the family were over, and that henceforth we should be reasonable and happy. Alas, Sir, I have discovered, that opportunity only was wanting to renew them; the weeds were all in the ground, though my Lady ——'s coldness had chilled their growth. Within these two months they have sprung up with a vengeance.

About this time my neighbour Mushroom's son, who had been sent out to India about a dozen years ago, returned home with a fortune, as we are told, of 100,000*l.* and has taken up his residence at his father's, till some finer place shall be found out for him. Before his arrival, he had made several large remittances to his father, for the purpose of dressing up the old house a little, so as to make it fit for his reception, and had sent a trunk full of fineries to dress up his mother and sisters for the same purpose. The good old Lady, however, restrained her daughters from wearing them (as indeed they did not well know how to make them up or put them on) till her son should arrive. His arrival furnished them with a very able assistant: the young man had made a love-

match before he left this country, with a good-looking girl of our neighbourhood, who, not altogether with his inclination, had gone out to him soon after his establishment in India. This Lady returned hither with him, and has edified all the family amazingly.

But her instructions are not confined to her own family; mine is unluckily included. This is a favour which my wife is very proud of; as Mrs. Mushroom has forgot most of her old acquaintance in the parish, and associates only with us, and one or two more of her neighbours, who have what she calls *capability*; that is, Sir, as I understand it, who will listen to all the nonsense she talks, and ape all the follies she practises. These are strong words; but it would put any man in a passion to see how she goes on. I don't know how it is, but I am ten times angrier at this new plague than I was with Lady ——. For her I had many apologies; but to think of that little chit Peg Mushroom playing all this mischief among us! Why, Sir, I remember her but as it were yesterday, when she used to come draggled to our house of a morning a-foot, and ride home double, on my blind mare, behind one of the plough-boys.

But I interrupt my account of things in my anger at them. The Sunday after these new-comers' arrival, they appeared in church, where their pew was all carpeted and cushioned over for their reception, so bedizened—there were flowered muslins and gold muslins, white shawls and red shawls, white feathers and red feathers; and every now and then the young Mushroom girls pulled out little bottles that sent such a perfume around them.—Nay, my old friend, their father, like a fool as he was, had such a mixture of black sattin and pink sattin about him, and was so stiff and awkward in his finery, that he looked for all

the world like the *King of Clubs*, and seemed, poor man! to have as little to say for himself.

But all this, Sir, is no joking matter to me. Some of the neighbours, indeed, laugh at it; but we who are favourites say that is nothing but envy. My wife and daughter Mary have rummaged out their tetes and feathers; and the hoops that had suffered a little from the moths, have been put in complete repair again. I was silly enough to let my wife get hold of a draught on town for the price of my last years's barley; and I verily believe she and Mary alone carry the produce of ten acres on their backs. My wife said, a shawl was a decent comfortable wear for a middle-aged woman like her (my Rachael, by the way has been fifty these ten years); and so she gave orders to purchase one at a sale in town, which she got a monstrous bargain, though I am ashamed to tell you, that it stood me in two fat oxen and a year-old cow.

I am glad to take this estimate of things, because in the value of money we are now got into a style of expression which loses all idea of small sums. Hundreds and thousands of pounds carried a sound of some importance, and could easily be divided into lesser parts; but Madam Mushroom's *Lack*, or half a Lack, sounds like nothing at all; and she has stories which she tells to my poor gaping girls, of a single supper in the East, given by some Nabob with half a dozen hard names, that cost one or two of those Lacks, besides half a Lack in *trifling* presents to the company. In those stories, the East Indian Lady, being subject to no contradiction, goes on without interruption or commentary, till my poor wife and daughters' heads are turned quite topsy-turvy. Even mine, though reckoned tolerably solid, is really dizzy with hearing her. There are such accounts of

Nabobs, Rajahs, and Rajah-Pouts, elephants, palanquins, and processions; so stuck full of gold, diamonds, pearls, and precious stones, with episodes of dancing girls, and *otter* of roses!—I have heard nothing like it since I was a boy, and used to be delighted with reading the Arabian Nights Entertainments.

The effect of all this on my family you will easily guess. Not only does it rob me of my money, but them of their happiness. Every thing that used to be thought comfortable or convenient formerly, is now intolerable and disgusting. Every thing we now put on, or eat, or drink, is immediately brought into comparison with the dress, provisions, and liquors at *Mushroom-Hall*, for so they have new-christened my neighbour's farm-house. My girls' home made gowns, of which they were lately so proud, have been thrown by with contempt since they saw Mrs. Mushroom's muslins from Bengal; our barn-door fowls, we used to say, were so fat and well-tasted, we now make awkward attempts, by garlic and pepper, to turn into the form of *Curries* and *Peelaws;* and the old October we were wont to brag all our neighbours with, none of the family but myself will condescend to taste, since they drank Mr. Mushroom's India Madeira.

In short, Sir, I am ten times worse off with this fresh disaster than I was with the former unlucky intimacy with Lady——. My Lady——was at some distance in point of place, and still more in point of rank from us; but this new plague is close at our doors, and Mrs. Mushroom is so obliging as to be a constant visitor. I am really afraid that I must sell my little estate, and leave this part of the country altogether; that I must try to find out some new place of residence, where Nabobs, Rajahs, and Lacks of Rupees, were never heard of, and where

people know no more of Bengal than of the Man in the Moon——I am, &c.

JOHN HOMESPUN.

It is with peculiar satisfaction that the Lounger has received this commencement of Mr. Homespun's correspondence, of which he knows the value, and hopes for the continuance.

Z

N° 18. SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 1785.

It has been observed, that the world is generally just in the opinions which it forms of the characters of the different persons who appear on the stage of life; that few have been held high in the estimation of the public who have not deserved it; and that instances as rarely occur of its censure misapplied, as of its applause misplaced. But though this remark, it must be allowed is true in the general, yet experience teaches that it cannot be admitted without exceptions; and that the truly virtuous and deserving, particularly in the private walks of life, may often pass unnoticed, while the less worthy may become the objects of favour.

Cleora was married at an early period of life. Gaily educated, and thoughtless in disposition, she was incapable of any strong attachment. She married *Lothario*, because he was a man of the *ton*, dressed well, kept good company, and professed himself her humble admirer. He married her, because she was reckoned pretty, danced well, was a toast, and

was as much in the fashion as he was. As they went together without affection, so neither of them allowed their love to be troublesome to the other. Pleasure, dissipation, show, was the taste of both. Lothario was sometimes at home, and in his wife's company; but then it was only in a crowd, and amidst a variety of guests. Abroad they sometimes met at dinner and supper parties; but as frequently their parties were not the same, and their amusements lay in different quarters.

Such a life of dissipation could not be supported without great expence. Though Lothario was possessed of a considerable land-estate, yet when he succeeded to it, it was much incumbered with debt; and that debt was now greatly increased by his own extravagance. Every year made a new bond or mortgage necessary.

Cleora knew all this; but she allowed it not to make any impression on her mind. It was too serious a subject to be suffered to intrude itself in the midst of her enjoyments. The mother of a numerous family, she is equally inattentive with Lothario, to giving them proper habits and impressions. The boys, neglecting every useful branch of study, by a strange combination, are both beaux and blackguards. At public places they are reckoned fashionable, while, at the same time, in their private amusements they value themselves on their coarseness and intemperance. The daughters are now come to the age of women; but Cleora has no other object as to them than to increase their fondness for public places and late hours: devoted to these herself, she makes her daughters the pretext for her own indulgences.

Thus Cleora, if she were to think, if she were to stop her course of dissipation for a moment, would see bankruptcy at hand, and her children, if not her-

self and her husband, reduced to want; her children brought up without education, and initiated in nothing but the ways of idleness and folly. With all this, Cleora retains a good character in the world: her cheerfulness, her gaiety, make her a favourite wherever she goes. 'Tis a pity,' it is sometimes said, 'that her husband was not more attentive to her and her children; but it is not her fault. She is indeed to be commended for submitting with so much ease to her fate; one would never discover that she was married to Lothario.'——Such is the general character which Cleora bears; and if any one ever expresses a hint to the contrary, it is considered as the remark of a person disposed to be consorious.

How shall I contrast with Cleora the conduct of Aurelia? She also married young, before she had learned to fell and judge for herself, and at a time when she was entirely given up to the direction and disposal of her parents. It has been unfortunately the fate of some of the best of women, to become the wives of men in many respects their inferiors both in understanding and in character. Amidst the chances of life, the intricacies of situation, or from the deception of minds whose very virtues betray their caution, this will sometimes happen. Cleanthes, the husband of Aurelia, is of a character very similar to that of Cleora's husband, Lothario, and on many accounts an unfortunate match for Aurelia. But Cleanthes being reputed to be a man of fortune, possessing a good address, and believed to be possessed of good-nature, it was the fate of Aurelia to be joined to him for life. Those habits of thoughtlessness and extravagance, however, which Cleanthes had acquired before marriage, never forsook him: he even became indifferent and negligent of Aurelia, and a family of fine children which she brought him. Intemperate in his pleasures, and inordinate in his ex-

pence, he plunged headlong into every fashionable folly, into every species of dissipation. Aurelia felt much anguish at this conduct of her husband: she endeavoured by every gentle method in her power to reclaim him, and to gain his mind to virtue and domestic enjoyment. All her efforts proved ineffectual. Cleanthes was not yet, however, so lost as not to feel at times the reproaches of his conscience; but, instead of endeavouring to remove, he tried to avoid them. In this situation, Aurelia was like another conscience: the reflection on her quiet and gentle virtues was like a mirror that did but shew him his own ugliness, and frightened at the sight, he only thought how to escape it. Thus abandoned by himself, thus having forsaken Aurelia, and every better feeling, he has gone more and more headlong into vice—intemperance has become his companion, and expence much beyond his income has attended it.

What a situation for Aurelia! With a mind fitted for every domestic enjoyment, she sees her husband a prey to folly and extravagance, ruining his fortune, and dead to every proper sentiment. One only comfort remains—the pleasure she receives from her children. Her only son, who promises to be all a parent could wish, has been placed at a distant academy; and a rich uncle, who has no children of his own, has adopted him as his son. Her three daughters live with herself, and her great object is to educate and instruct them; and in this she is well rewarded, by the appearance of their promising virtues, and the display of their opening talents.

With all these amiable parts of Aurelia's conduct, justice is not done her in the opinion of the world. Her virtues are unknown, or pass unnoticed. It is frequently said, 'That Cleanthes is a good fellow: pity he had not a wife of a less grave disposition, more suited to his taste. If he had, he might have

been less expensive, and his pleasures been more fixed at home.'

It was but the other evening that in making a course of visits, or to use an expression more consonant to my character, in *lounging* from one place to another, I called at a house, where I found Cleora engaged in deep play, and her eldest daughter sitting by her, attending to the game. At that moment Lothario happened to come into the room. He drew a chair near some ladies at another table, and gave a nod of indifference to his daughter. 'La! Sir,' said Miss, 'we did not look for you; we thought you were at Sir John's.'——Her mother gave one look behind; asked her partner if she had not held the king; and then desired her to set up two by honours and the odd trick.'

The same evening I called at the house of Cleanthes. Him I found abroad, but Aurelia was at home. I was shewn into the room where she was, where I found her seated with her three girls around her. On the table lay several books, among which were the *Spectator*, the *Man of Feeling*, and the *Theatre of Education*. She herself was busy with her needle; and her two youngest girls were occupied in the same manner, under her direction. The eldest was employed in reading. When I entered the room, one of the girls took me by the hand, and kindly welcomed me. 'I thought,' however, said she, with a most expressive look, 'it had been Papa; my Mamma expected him.' A tear started into Aurelia's eye. She soon, however, resumed her cheerfulness; and I remained for a considerable time in this domestic party, receiving a pleasure which I cannot describe, in the conversation of Aurelia, the amiableness and propriety of her conduct, her behaviour to her children, and theirs to her.

When I came home, I could not help reflecting on the different characters of Aurelia and Cleora, placed in situations not dissimilar; one drawing from her very want of feeling and of duty, the suffrage of the world! the other, from the very exercise of the most disinterested virtue, suffering its neglect, and incurring its censure! Yet with all her afflictions and all her sorrows, who would not rather wish to be the suffering and virtuous Aurelia, than the gay and thoughtless Cleora! The one may enjoy the dissipation of the world, and the good-liking of its votaries; but the other must possess that approbation from her own mind, which infinitely surpasses all the external enjoyment which the world is able to bestow.

P

N° 19. SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

Hi sunt invidiæ, nimirum, Regule, mores,
Præferat antiquos semper ut illa novis.

MARTIAL.

SIR,

THERE are a set of cynical old men, who are perpetually dinning our ears with the praises of times past, who are fond of drawing comparisons between the ancients and moderns, much to the disparagement of the latter and who take a misanthropical delight in representing mankind as degenerating from age to age, both in mental and corporeal endowments With these people, all science is held to be upon the decline; arts as retrograde; the greater virtues abso-

lutely annihilated; and morality itself tending fast to utter extinction. Even the human figure is dwindling away in stature, and diminishing in strength; the climates are altered, the seasons become yearly more inclement; the earth is losing its fertility, and the sun its heat. Now, Sir, although I am disposed to admit that there is some foundation for these complaints in a very few particulars, and will, for instance, readily allow, that the music of the moderns is not quite so powerful in its effects as that of Orpheus: that *Augustus* King of Poland, though he could bend a horse-shoe, could not have pitched a bar with *Hercules;* that swans have lost the faculty of singing; and that, even in the period of my own remembrance, there is a great decay in the art of making plumbcakes and penny pies: yet I think it might be easily proved, that in other respects the picture is a very false one; and I am thoroughly convinced, that upon an impartial estimate of the merits of the ancient and modern world, the scale of the latter would very greatly preponderate.

I do not intend at present to enter into a complete discussion of this important subject, but shall content myself with advancing a very few arguments in refutation of the opinion of those old grumblers I have mentioned; and I think it will be no difficult matter to shew, that the fault lies entirely in their own splenetic and peevish humours; and that the world, so far from growing worse, is in reality much better now than in ancient times. You will excuse my neglect of methodical arrangement; for as this is a picture consisting of many detached groups, it does not signify at which end we begin.

I have been often much amazed at hearing it seriously maintained, that mankind are more vicious and abandoned in modern times, than they were in the days of antiquity. The moderns, no doubt, have

made many notable discoveries in the arts and sciences; but I do not find that murder, robbery, perjury, adultery, &c. are among the number. It is true, that as there is a fashion in all human affairs, which alters with the times, its influence may be observed in crimes, as well as in every thing else: but here the advantage, I will be bold to say, lies entirely on the side of the moderns. Long ago, in committing crimes, they had a barbarous and brutal method of going directly to the point. If a man had an ill-will at his neighbour, he knocked him on the head the first time he met him, or perhaps set fire to his house, and made a holocaust of him, his wife, and children. But now the mode is altered much for the better. We see none of those wild beasts in society. An enemy now wears the countenance of a friend; he shows you all the politeness in the world to your face, and only ruins your reputation behind your back: he lends you money, if you are much in need of it, and only throws you into jail when you are starving out of it: he would be the last man in the world to revenge himself on you by shooting or stabbing; but if through his means you grow so tired of life as to cut your own throat, to be sure it is no fault of his.

In case, however, it should be necessary for him to be your executioner, which often happens where the injury is of a very atrocious nature; such as, if you should by chance jostle a gentleman in the street, spit by accident on his shoe, or disturb him in a private conversation with your wife; he gives you warning, in the politest manner, of his intentions; says he believes you to be in every respect a man of honour; and only requests you, by a civil card, to come and be shot through the head.

The ancients, it must be owned, were remarkably inferior to the moderns, both in good taste and in

good manners. That refinement of taste which manifests itself by a polite contempt of all home productions, and a generous admiration of every thing that is foreign, seems indeed to be a qualification peculiar to the moderns. A well-educated British gentleman, it may be truly said, is of no country whatever. He unites in himself the characteristics of all different nations: he talks and dresses French, and sings Italian: he rivals the Spaniard in indolence, and the German in drinking: his house is Grecian, his offices Gothic, and his furniture Chinese. He preserves the same impartiality in his religion; and, finding no solid reasons for preferring Confucius to Brama, or Mahometanism to Christianity, he has for all their doctrines an equal indulgence.

But how different from this the character of the Greeks and Romans! Servily attached to their own manners and customs, they treated foreigners with contempt. What, in effect, could be expected of them, who were such barbarians themselves, as to stigmatise all other nations by that opprobrious epithet?

There is no virtue for which the ancients have got greater credit than for their patriotism; yet on examination it will appear, that their merits in this article have been very much exaggerated. It is true, that we find among them some striking instances of this virtue in individuals; but it never was diffused, as with us, among the great body of the people. The porters and hackney coachmen at Rome and Athens were deplorably ignorant of the affairs of state. There were no clubs in those capitals for Constitutional Reformation. Carpenters and bricklayers reformed the boroughs only by the axe and hammer; shoemakers and tailors were dexterous enough at the awl and needle, but could not mend the government.

Perhaps even the patriotism of individuals among the ancients has got more than its due share of praise; and upon a fair estimate it might be found, that the moderns could produce equal, if not superior examples of the same heroic virtue. What is there, for instance, so remarkable in the boasted example of Themistocles and Aristides? They were bitter enemies, but forgot their quarrels when their country was in danger, and joined their interests to prevent its falling a prey to the Persians: so our modern statesmen, who the one day declare the most rooted abhorrence and detestation of each other, both in their public and private characters, the next day shake hands for the good of their country, agree in every measure, and profess for each other the most sincere esteem and veneration. Decius, it is true, devoted himself for his country, and, by sacrificing his own life, won a great victory over the enemies of Rome: but our commanders go much farther; for they devote whole armies, from a pure spirit of patriotism. In short, it may be confidently asserted, that all those bright examples we read of in ancient story, may find their parallels in a modern newspaper.

And now, Sir, that I have mentioned a newspaper, allow me to observe, that those brief chronicles of the times afford every day numberless proofs of the superiority of the moderns to the ancients in many of the most useful arts and sciences. In that most noble of all arts, the art of healing, so great is the perfection to which the moderns have attained, that one of your predecessors has very justly expressed his astonishment at reading in the bills of mortality the great number of people who chuse to die of such and such distempers, for every one of which there are infallible and specific cures. To be sure, there is no helping the folly of some people,

who will persist in refusing a cure till they are in a manner *in articulo mortis* (in the last agony): but it is to be hoped we shall hear no more of such determined suicide, when we read, that some of those modern Esculapiuses chuse only such patients as are precisely in the situation of incurables, to be the subjects of their practice. One of those excellent physicians professes, in his advertisements, that he wishes none (his words are strongly exclusive) to apply to him, but such as have been deemed incurable, or made such by the faculty; thereby encouraging the diseased of all kinds first to take every possible means to render themselves incurable, that they may thus be qualified for being perfectly cured by him.

Somewhat analagous to the science of medicine, is the art of repairing the human figure. And here, Sir, the pre-eminence of the moderns is equally distinguished. In this most useful art, the skill of the ancients went no farther than to give a little exterior embellishment to the countenance. They knew nothing of that creative power which extends to the making of limbs and organs as well as features. The parchment calves, the cork-rump, and bolster'd spring boddice; the making of glass-eyes, and the transplantation of teeth, are all inventions absolutely modern. And since we know for certain, that mechanism is now so perfected, that a wooden man can be made to perform a solo on the violin, play a game at chess, walk, and even utter articulate sounds; I see no reason to doubt, that in process of time we may have artificial men currently walking the streets, performing all the functions of life, and discharging their duty in society just as well, and more peaceably than the real ones. When the art of making automatoms has attained to this perfection, which we may reasonably hope will happen in a very few years, we may congratulate ourselves on the very great political

benefits which must arise from this admirable invention. As there is no doubt that the merits of this class of men will entitle them to the highest promotions, it is then we may expect every department of the state to be supplied by a set of upright and inflexible magistrates: the great machine of government will be most ably conducted: judges will administer justice with the most rigid impartiality; and (what is the great *desideratum* of the present age) a wooden king may sit at the helm of affairs, who will support the dignity of the crown with no expence to the nation, and relieve them at the same time of all their anxious fear about the extension of his prerogative.

I could easily, Sir, draw out this estimate to a much greater length; but believing I have already said enough to produce a thorough conviction of the truth of my proposition, I subscribe myself, with great respect, yours,

PAUL PASQUIN.

N° 20. SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 1785.

Decipit exemplar vitiis imitabile. HOR.

No species of composition is more generally read by one class of readers, or more undervalued by another, than that of the Novel. Its favourable reception from the young and the indolent, to whom the exercise of imagination is delightful, and the labour of thought is irksome, needs not to be wondered at; but the contempt which it meets from the more respect-

able class of literary men, it may perhaps be entitled to plead that it does not deserve. Considered in the abstract, as containing an interesting relation of events, illustrative of the manners and characters of mankind, it surely merits a higher station in the world of letters than is generally assigned it. If it has not the dignity, it has at least most of the difficulties, of the Epic or the Drama. The conduct of its fable, the support of its characters, the contrivance of its incidents, and its developement of the passions, require a degree of invention, judgment, taste, and feeling, not much, if at all, inferior to those higher departments of writing, for the composition of which a very uncommon portion of genius is supposed to be requisite. Those difficulties are at the same time heightened by the circumstance, of this species of writing being of all others the most open to the judgment of the people; because it represents domestic scenes and situations in private life, in the execution of which any man may detect errors and discover blemishes, while the author has neither the pomp of poetry, nor the decoration of the stage, to cover or to conceal them.

To this circumstance, however, may perhaps be imputed the degradation into which it has fallen.— As few endowments were necessary to judge, so few have been supposed necessary to compose a Novel; and all whose necessities or vanity prompted them to write, betook themselves to a field, which, as they imagined, it required no extent of information or depth of learning to cultivate, but in which a heated imagination, or an excursive fancy, were alone sufficient to succeed; and men of genius and of knowledge, despising a province in which such competitors were to be met, retired from it in disgust, and left it in the hands of the unworthy.

The effects of this have been felt, not only in the

debasement of the Novel in point of literary merit, but in another particular still more material, in its perversion from a moral or instructive purpose to one directly the reverse. Ignorance and dulness are seldom long inoffensive, but generally support their own native insignificance by an alliance with voluptuousness and vice.

Even of those few Novels which superior men have written, it cannot always be said, that they are equally calculated to improve as to delight. Nor is this only to be objected to some who have been professedly less scrupulous in that particular; but I am afraid may be also imputed to those whose works were meant to convey no bad impression, but, on the contrary, were intended to aid the cause of virtue, and to hold out patterns of the most exalted benevolence.

I am not, however, disposed to carry the idea of the dangerous tendency of all Novels quite so far as some rigid moralists have done. As promoting a certain refinement of mind, they operate like all other works of genius and feeling, and have indeed a more immediate tendency to produce it than most others, from their treating of those very subjects which the reader will find around him in the world, and their containing those very situations in which he himself may not improbably at some time or other be placed. Those who object to them as inculcating precepts, and holding forth examples, of a refinement which virtue does not require, and which honesty is better without, do not perhaps sufficiently attend to the period of society which produces them. The code of morality must necessarily be enlarged in proportion to that state of manners to which cultivated æras give birth. As the idea of property made a crime of theft, as the invention of oaths made falsehood perjury; so the necessary refinement

in manners of highly-polished nations creates a variety of duties and of offences, which men in ruder, and, it may be (for I enter not into that question,) happier periods of society, could never have imagined.

The principal danger of Novels, as forming a mistaken and pernicious system of morality, seems to me to arise from that contrast between one virtue or excellence and another, that war of duties which is to be found in many of them, particularly in that species called the *Sentimental*. These have been chiefly borrowed from our neighbours the French, whose style of manners, and the very powers of whose language, give them a great advantage in the delineation of that nicety, that subtilty of feeling, those entanglements of delicacy, which are so much interwoven with the characters and conduct of the chief personages in many of their most celebrated Novels. In this rivalship of virtues and of duties, those are always likely to be preferred which in truth and reason are subordinate, and those to be degraded which ought to be paramount. The last, being of that great cardinal sort, which must be common, because they apply to the great leading relations and circumstances of life, have an appearance less dignified and heroic than the others, which, as they come forth only on extraordinary occasions, are more apt to attract the view and excite the admiration of beholders. The duty to parents is contrasted with the ties of friendship and of love; the virtues of justice, of prudence, of œconomy, are put in competition with the exertions of generosity, of benevolence, and of compassion: and even of these virtues of sentiment there are still more refined divisions, in which the overstrained delicacy of the persons represented always leads them to act from the motive least obvious, and therefore generally the least reasonable.

In the enthusiasm of sentiment there is much the same danger as in the enthusiasm of religion, of substituting certain impulses and feelings of what may be called a visionary kind, in the place of real practical duties, which, in morals, as in theology, we might not improperly denominate good works. In morals, as in religion, there are not wanting instances of refined sentimentalists, who are contented with talking of virtues which they never practise, who pay in words what they owe in actions; or perhaps what is fully as dangerous, who open their minds to impressions which never have any effect upon their conduct, but are considered as something foreign to and distinct from it. This separation of conscience from feeling is a depravity of the most pernicious sort; it eludes the strongest obligation to rectitude, it blunts the strongest incitement to virtue; when the ties of the first bind the sentiment and not the will, and the rewards of the latter crown not the heart but the imagination.

That creation of refined and subtile feeling, reared by the authors of the works to which I allude, has an ill effect, not only on our ideas of virtue, but also on our estimate of happiness. That sickly sort of refinement creates imaginary evils and distresses, and imaginary blessings and enjoyments, which embitter the common disappointments, and depreciate the common attainments of life. This affects the temper doubly, both with respect to ourselves and others: with respect to ourselves, from what we think ought to be our lot; with regard to others, from what we think ought to be their sentiments. It inspires a certain childish pride of our own superior delicacy, and an unfortunate contempt of the plain worth, the ordinary but useful occupations and ideas of those around us.

The reproach which has been sometimes made to Novels, of exhibiting ‘ such faultless monsters as the world ne'er saw,’ may be just on the score of entertainment to their readers, to whom the delineation of uniform virtue, except when it is called into striking situations, will no doubt be insipid. But in point of moral tendency, the opposite character is much more reprehensible; I mean that character of mingled virtue and vice which is to be found in some of the best of our Novels. Instances will readily occur to every reader, where the hero of the performance has violated, in one page, the most sacred laws of society, to whom, by the mere turning of the leaf, we are to be reconciled, whom we are to be made to love and admire, for the beauty of some humane or the brilliancy of some heroic action. It is dangerous thus to bring us into the society of Vice, though introduced or accompanied by Virtue. In the application to ourselves, in which the moral tendency of all imaginary characters must be supposed to consist, this nourishes and supports a very common kind of self-deception, by which men are apt to balance their faults by the consideration of their good qualities; an account which, besides the fallacy of its principle, can scarcely fail to be erroneous, from our natural propensity to state our faults at their lowest, and our good qualities at their highest rate.

I have purposely pointed my observations, not to that common herd of Novels (the wretched offspring of circulating libraries) which are despised for their insignificance, or proscribed for their immorality; but to the errors, as they appear to me, of those admired ones which are frequently put into the hands of youth for imitation as well as amusement. Of youth it is essential to preserve the imagination sound

as well as pure, and not to allow them to forget, amidst the intricacies of Sentiment, or the dreams of Sensibility, the truths of Reason, or the laws of Principle.

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N° 21. SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR, *London*, 1785.

I PROPOSE, by this letter to give you the history of a few particulars in a life of too little consequence to be worthy the attention of the public, were it not that it may possibly afford some useful materials for instruction.

My father was the descendant of an ancient family in the county of —— in Scotland, possessed only of a moderate fortune. His ancestors had uniformly lived in the country, except occasionally for a few months in the winter; and he himself would probably have observed the same plan, had it not been for the following occurrence.

The county where his estate lay had long been divided into two parties, who had tried to get the political direction of it. They came at length to be tired of the trouble and expence to which this contest put them; and a connection which happened to be formed by the heads of both sides with the minister at the time, was an additional inducement to drop it.

In this situation the election of a member of parliament happened to come on; but as the chiefs of

neither party, though their hostilities had ceased, inclined to pay the other the compliment of electing a person who was keenly attached to it, my father was fixed upon as a person who was generally beloved, and disagreeable to nobody.

Though becoming a member of parliament was certainly a hazardous step, considering the smallness of my father's fortune, yet his vanity could not resist the temptation. To parliament accordingly he went; where, after some years attendance, as he attached himself closely to the minister, was a sure vote, and was not without some talents for business, he arrived at the height of his wishes, and obtained a considerable post for life.

This change in his situation made him form new plans and new views for his family.

It was now resolved that the place of our residence should be changed, and that for the future it should be settled in London. Accordingly, he and his two daughters, of whom the writer of this letter is one (our mother had died some time before,) removed from Scotland, and took up their abode in the capital.

I was fourteen years of age, and my sister Harriet eleven, when this material change in our situation took place. I shall not easily forget the giddy joy I felt when the plan was first proposed; nor the expectations with which my heart beat when the measure was resolved on.

Upon our arrival in town, my father's affection for his daughters, not to say his vanity, which led him to think that nothing was too high for them, made him spare no expence to get us instructed in every fashionable accomplishment. No attention was neglected, to bestow upon us every qualification which the best masters, and an introduction into the best company, could produce.

Though my father's revenue was now considerable, yet the expence of having a family in London went far beyond his income. The distresses which this occasioned (as is commonly the case with such distresses) were felt long before they were endeavoured to be remedied; at last, however, they became so urgent, as to oblige my father to think of retrenching his expences, by returning for a while to the country.

Thither accordingly we repaired. I will not trouble you with giving a comparison of the different sensations I felt when I first left the country, with those which I entertained on my return. Suffice it to say, that we were received with the utmost respect and attion. My father's situation, and his general popularity, were sufficient to secure this; and our conduct was certainly such as not to give offence.

My father was now advanced in years. Notwithstanding the emoluments of his office, he found his fortune not increasing, and he became anxious to have my sister and me settled in the world. No opportunity of this kind however occurred. The gentlemen of our part of the country, though they treated us with respect, never thought of us for wives. A London, a fashionable, and showy education, they considered as incompatible with their plans and views of life. They married girls like themselves, whose habits were like their own.

After having somewhat repaired the waste of London by the œconomy of the country, we returned once more to the metropolis. By the greatest accident in the world, my sister Harriet happened to catch the fancy of a young nobleman of fashion and address. Dining one day with a group of his companions, he gave Harriet G——— for his toast,—swearing a great oath,—she was the finest girl in the world—'I have a great mind,' said he, 'to marry

her.'—He was as good as his word, and their marriage soon after followed.

A marriage of this kind, made with levity, and entered on without affection, had little chance to be a happy one. Harriet's husband soon not only became indifferent, but was not even at pains to conceal his indifference. His amusements lay in hunting, in drinking, in cock-fighting, in gaming:—all her accomplishments, her music, her knowledge in modern languages, her taste in dress, her skill in painting, &c. he valued not, nor cared for. This negligence, for a while sunk deep into her heart; it threw her into melancholy, and I was apprehenisve of the consequences of it to her health. In time, however, her spirits revived, and she became as indifferent about her husband as he was about her. She even went the length of wishing to show him marks of her indifference.

In this situation they now are: more than indifferent, they hate one another; and their only pleasure consists, though they do it with the most finished good-breeding, in giving mutual vexation. He never at home, she always abroad;—he extravagant in his pleasures, she no less so in hers;—he in one gaming party, she in another.

You will naturally, Sir, wish to know what is my situation, I can assure you it is by no means agreeable: My father has been for some time dead. He died without leaving a shilling, his debts being fully equal to his estate. In these circumstances, it became a matter of necessity, not of choice, that I should live with my sister; but from what I have already said, you must easily see my residence in her family cannot be desirable. The bad terms in which my sister and her Lord live, make me neither loved nor trusted by either. The husband is jealous that I possess the confidence of his Lady, and know

more than I should know; she again thinks me a spy upon her enjoyments, and is displeased that I should disapprove of that dissipation to which she has so entirely devoted herself.

A thousand times have I wished to leave this house, where no prospect of enjoyment for me now remains; but as often have I found every such scheme impracticable. My relations in the country have now forgotten me; and even if they remembered me with more interest than I am afraid they do, would not willingly receive into their family one whom they naturally think a fashionable residence in London must have so much spoiled. I have frequently thought of hiring a small house, and living by myself, but I find I am unable to afford it. In this state I must remain where I am, neglected by the Earl of ——, and not trusted by the Countess. My situation I have often thought worse than that of their housekeeper; for while she receives their wages, she has it in her power to leave them whenever she has a mind.

With what bitter reflections do I now recollect the time when I first left the country! How different has been the fate of Lucy R—— from mine! She was the early companion of my youth. She married when she was young, a gentleman without fortune, but possessed of every good quality. Though the friends of both sides considered the match as imprudent they yielded to the inclination of the parties. It certainly was not a marriage either of interest or ambition; but it was a marriage of choice, of affection. Heaven has rewarded it.——The very narrowness of their circumstances, the mutual inconveniences, the hardships they had to undergo, but endeared them the more to each other. These were an additional incitement to the industry of Lucy's husband, and contributed to the prosperous situation at which he has now arrived. I received lately a letter from

Lucy, giving me an account of her situation, which, though expressed in the simplest terms, went to my heart. 'How happy am I,' says she; the greatest part of my happiness consists in my having added to to the comfort of dear Charles. It was but yesterday he told me, that but for me he should have sunk under the difficulties of life, but for me he would not have been able to bear up against them; but with you,' said he,——' It is needless to add the remainder of his affectionate address.'

Such is the letter of Lucy R——. I shall not trouble you with any remarks on the difference of her situation and mine. The quiet ordinary path is the road to real and lasting enjoyment; and if parents wish to make their children happy, they should educate them for that station in which fortune has placed them; they should know that, for one of my sex at least, there is more chance of felicity in the private stations of life, than in all the noise, and pomp, and show of a more exalted situation.

A I am, &c. A. G.

N° 22. SATURDAY, JULY 2, 1785.

EVERY periodical writer, like every knight-errant of old in assuming his office, is understood to swear fealty to the Ladies, I presume, therefore, it is now so much an acknowledged quality of the profession, that it is needless for any individual to declare it. Above all others, the *Lounger* would wish to attract their notice and conciliate their favour. Is it possible

to be busy independent of the Ladies; but he must be a brute indeed who can be idle without 'em.

I hope then, I may take credit for a particular attention to their interests, their employments, and their amusements. I shall consider no circumstance, however minute, as below my regard, which can any how affect them; and every thing in the female form will be entitled to the immediate notice of the *Lounger*.

From a correspondent who is well aware of this part of my plan, I have just received intelligence, that a very little, but a very wonderful Lady, intends to do herself the pleasure of visiting Edinburgh this season; and I take the first opportunity of announcing her intention to my readers. The Lady I mean is the '*Merveilleuse Poupée parlante*;' the wonderful speaking figure, who has so much surprised and amused the best company, both on the continent, where she was first produced, and in England, where she has spent the last year of her life. I had the honour of waiting on her first at Brussels, and then at London: and shall take the liberty, by way of ushering her into Scotland, to relate some particulars that passed in the course of my last visit, during the Lady's residence in the parish of St. James.

The part of the company which more particularly attracted my notice, consisted of a gentleman and his lady, accompanied by a thin tall elderly gentlewoman, who appeared to be a relation, on whose arm the lady leaned as she came up stairs, and who carried a small white lap-dog, on whom her kinswoman bestowed a great many caresses, but the husband looked with rather less complacency. There were two very young ladies, attended by a sister somewhat older; but who seemed to have put on the womanly garb rather from size than age. Next them was placed an old gentleman, wrapped up in a warm surtout, with shrivelled cheeks, a sallow complexion, a laced

shoe on one foot, and ‘ his youthful hose a world too wide for his shrunk shanks,’ who took great pains to accommodate the eldest of the sisters with a convenient seat, and had hustled himself on the end of the bench beside her. In his devoirs he was assisted by a lively-looking little man, seemingly not much younger, but much fresher than him, who very soon told us, in the only English words he seemed master of, that he was a native of Gascony, and had been but a few weeks in London. He was dressed in a full suit of black, had his hair tied in a thin queue, and his curls much indebted to a large quantity of powder and pomatum. Seeing me the only *isolé* person near him, he made a sign for me to approach the place where the *Poupée* was to give audience; and with a continuation of the same friendly action of his hand, offered me a pinch of snuff out of a very beautiful *papier maché* snuff-box. I thanked him in French, and we were immediately on an intimate footing. ‘ Et vous Monsieur,’——said he, holding out the box to the gentleman with the slender legs. The old gentleman took the box; and examined very curiously some figures that were painted on the lid.

The master of the exhibition now made his appearance, and addressed the company (as nearly as I can recollect, after hearing the same piece of eloquence twice) in the following words: ‘ Ladies and Gentlemen, Ave de goodness to regard dis young Lady. She has had de honneur to be seen by de Emperor of Germany, de King of Prusse, de King and Queen of France, and Monseigneur le Dauphin, when he was but tri monts old, at which time she had de honneur of being exactly of de same size vid Monseigneur. You see her attach'd to de plafond of de chamber only by dis small chain, no bigger dan one silk trid, and I hold myself here at long distance from her, so dat it is impossible der

can be communication vid any person. Yon see dat trompette which she wears at her mout; in dat if you speak any question it please you to put, in ever so low a visper, Ma'moiselle will ave de honneur of making answer.'

There was a short pause, nobody seeming to chuse being the first to address her; till my Gascon rose, and making a bow, first to the old gentleman, by way of apology, and then to the young lady who sat next to him, handed her, who seemed not well to know whether to refuse going or not, up to the place and with another bow, presented her to the figure, to whom her question was to be addressed. Having been a visitor of the lady's before, I knew how to make the most of my visit; and contrived to place myself in such a situation as not only to hear the questions that should be put aloud, but to make a pretty shrewd guess at those which the questioner might not quite so much incline should be audible to the company, as well as the answers. The young lady blushed, smiled, and bit her fan; but being reassured by her conductor, and the rest of the company, at last put her mouth to the little trumpet that conveys the question, and asked Mademoiselle in a half whisper, 'How many lovers she had?'—'More than are good for me.'——Miss smiled again, but looked as if she did not agree with her.

The exhibitor made a sign to the French gentleman, who had handed back the young lady to her seat, to ask his question next. 'Place aux Dames,' said he, pointing to the married lady I mentioned before; who, recommending her lap-dog, who was sleeping on the bench by her, to the care of her relation, whom she now called cousin Martha, advanced to the figure, and asked her, 'If she was married?'—'Dieu m'en garde—Heaven forbid,' answered the Poupée.——The Lady looked at her

husband, and seemed as if she perfectly agreed with her.

As the gentleman got up to make way for his lady, he discomposed the lap-dog; for which his wife chid him, and scolded Martha. 'Does Monsieur chuse to ask any thing?' said the showman to him.—'Not I,' said he surlily. 'Does your Doll never speak but when she is spoken to?'——'Never, Sir; she is too well bred.'—He interpreted the question and his answer to the Frenchmen. 'C'est dommage,' said he in return. 'That's a pity the gentleman thinks;' re-interpreted the exhibitor to the married man. 'No, by G——, that it is not,' replied the other. The showman interpreted again;—the Gascon received it with one of those significant shrugs with which the philosophers of his country reconcile to themselves and others every dispensation of Providence.

A Lady, whom I had not observed before, now came forward. She was in a much fuller dress than any of the rest of the company, and had one of the finest complexions in the world. She looked very narrowly at the Poupée's head-dress, and the particular sit of her tucker. 'What sort of paint do you use?' said she, loud enough to be heard by us who were near her.—'Vous n'en avez pas besoin,—You have no need on't,' answered the figure; the equivoque was a very polite one. 'C'est charmant!' said the Frenchman, looking first on the Poupée, and then on the lady; the lady drew back, and seemed inclined to blush—but could not.

'Do you chuse, Sir?' said our exhibitor to me. I declined putting the lady to the trouble, having been convinced of her abilities at Brussels. On this the old gentleman came forward. Like the last questioner, he examined Mademoiselle very closely, putting on his spectacles to assist his examination. 'Pray, Miss,' said he with a sort of chuckle, 'do

you garter above or below the knee?' The answer was so low I could not hear it; but the old gentleman hobbled back to his seat, apparently not quite satisfied with his reception. The married lady now pressed her kinswoman to put her question in turn: but she would by no means consent to it, hinting that she could not think of putting her mouth to a trumpet that had so lately been polluted by the lips of a male. My friend the Gascon, on being told of her refusal, seemed to enjoy some joke that had struck him, and, as they sometimes think aloud, was muttering to himself. I heard the words, 'd'une certain age;' but he stopped short, and said aloud, that the Lady certainly thought it was more *selon les regles* for her to be asked questions than to ask them. Miss Martha pursed up her lips, and said something of impertinence and mixed companies. It is almost four, said her kinswoman; and taking up the lap-dog, walked out of the room, leaning upon Miss Martha, and telling her husband to follow them. The Frenchman was on his feet in an instant; and, skipping over the benches, got down stairs in time enough to call her servant, and to hand, first her lap-dog, and then its mistress, into the carriage, that waited for them. He offered his hand to Miss Martha, who would not accept of it. The husband brushed past him with a look that did not seem to thank him for his attentions. Go home, said the Lady to the footman, who looked to her for the order; and the coach drove from the door. The French gentleman turned to me, who was standing behind in the entrance; 'En Angleterre le marriage est une affaire si sombre,—In England marriage is so gloomy a business.'—'Quelquefois,——sometimes,' said I smiling.——My Frenchman caught himself immediately.—'Assurément, Monsieur n'est pas marié.'—I assured him I was not married.——'Il n'en

pas l'air,—You have not the look o'nt.'——This, in his opinion, was both a felicitation and a compliment; and so it had one of my best bows at parting.

V

N° 23. SATURDAY, JULY 9, 1785.

It has been remarked, that in proportion as a nation advances from barbarism to civilization, the women rise into esteem, hold a more important station in society, and become more and more objects of attention. Upon a fair estimate, we shall probably find a higher degree of true refinement in the polished nations of modern Europe, than what prevailed even in the brightest days of Greece and Rome. Accordingly, a lady at the court of Versailles, or of London, is treated with respect, attention, and observance, to which an Athenian beauty, or a Roman Matron was not accustomed.

One would naturally expect to meet with the same progress of refinement among writers who treat of the female character. We find however, that this is not the case; and that women are often treated in books with the most sovereign contempt by the most elegant writers. An English author, distinguished for the elegance and the politeness of his manners, while he acknowledges the influence of the fair sex, and inculcates the necessity of gaining their good graces by every man who wishes to advance in the road of ambition, at the same time talks of women in general as beings of an inferior order. He does not scruple to call them, 'children of a larger growth,' and to

say, that he never knew one woman capable of reasoning or of acting consequentially for four-and-twenty hours together.

It was not my intention at present to enter the lists with the Earl of Chesterfield. I flatter myself it is an unnecessary task, and that few of my readers require any other argument than their own feelings and observation, to be satisfied of the injustice of his Lordship's invective against the loveliest part of the creation, 'the last, best work of Heaven.'

This injustice of our sex towards the other, often arises from a want of duly considering the different conditions of each. The law in some instances considers women in a state of pupillage—and they frequently may be reckoned so in conduct. They are necessarily under the tutelage of circumstances and of situation, governed by the decorum of sex, by the forms of the world. If we picture to ourselves a woman divested of that pliability of mind, firm in resolve, unshaken in conduct, unmoved by the delicacies of situation, by the fashions of the times, by the fear even of common-place obloquy, or of flippant censure; in the delineation of such a character, we immediately change the idea of the sex, and, like the son of Peleus discovered amidst the daughters of Lycodemes, we see under the form of woman the virtues and qualities of a man.

There is one particular in which we hear the sex daily blamed, and in which their conduct has afforded matter for much severe censure; I mean, a predilection they are supposed to bear to frivolous men, possessing no one valuable talent, no one quality sufficient to procure either respect or esteem. In this, as in other things, I am inclined to believe, that it is not always in the freedom of choice, but in that vassalage of situation and circumstances which I mentioned, that their society is formed. But were I

even to admit that women are apt to prefer the society of men of light and showy parts to that of men of more cultivated minds; I cannot for my part, allow, that they merit all the obloquy that has been thrown upon them on that account.

There is in the female character a fear of offending, a self diffidence, a delicate sense of propriety, which renders a woman unhappy when she says or does, or thinks she has said or done, a thing not perfectly as it ought to have been. A quick perception, and a delicate sensibility, render her feelingly alive to the opinions of those around her. Hence proceeds that modest shyness, that bewitching softness, the most attractive charm which Heaven has bestowed on womankind. Afraid of an inferiority, a woman of sensibility feels a certain degree of uneasiness in the company of men of high ability and profound learning. Diffident of being able to converse with such men on equal terms, she fancies she is contemned by them; she feels a disagreeable restraint in their presence, from which she is glad to be relieved, and to find herself in a circle where, though she may meet with less genius, less knowledge, end less wit, she is more upon a footing with those around her, and less afraid of betraying any defect in herself.

Perhaps, too, men possessed of uncommon talents and great genius, are apt to trust too much to their intrinsic merit, and to despise, as beneath their regard, those graces and accomplishments, the sole end of which is to render a man agreeable in society. As gold, without being highly polished, will always be valued, they seem to think they may rest secure upon their sterling merit, as sufficient to procure them the esteem and consideration of mankind. How many men of genius and of knowledge could we name, whose manners are disgusting, and to whom nothing could reconcile us but a consciousness of

their superiority in the higher endowments of the mind? A Locke or a Newton may be very unpleasing companions, and may be deficient in every quality requisite to render a man agreeable in the common intercourse of life. But the same quick and delicate perception which gives pain to a woman when she imagines she herself has been guilty of any impropriety in behaviour or in manner, leads her to observe with attention the manners of others, to be charmed with the ease, the elegance, the politeness of a well-bred man, and to be disgusted with the first appearance of any thing, harsh, vulgar, or illiberal.

It may also be observed, that there is something in the female mind which delights more in the beautiful than the sublime, more in the amiable than the splendid, more in what engages and captivates, than in what awes with its grandeur or astonishes with its vastness. A woman must be masculine to a certain degree before she can prefer Homer to Virgil, Milton, to Tasso, and Shakspeare to Metastasio, or the bold strokes of Michael Angelo, to the graceful touches of Guido. May not the same softness and delicacy dispose her to prefer those gentle manners and amiable qualities which adorn private and domestic scenes, to the more splendid talents which fit a man to shine in public life, in the senate, or in the field, to those which qualify him to instruct and inform mankind by philosophical inquiry or deep investigation?

In this, as in every thing else, we have reason to admire the wisdom and benevolence of the Author of nature. It falls to the lot of a very small portion of the human race, to possess those talents which enable a man 'to read his history in a nation's eyes.' Were the regard, the esteem, the confidence of the women, confined to such alone, the bulk of man-

kind would be deprived of the best, the purest source of happiness which this world affords. What enjoyment can be compared with the felicity flowing from a union with a virtuous woman, who pours out her soul into the bosom of him she loves, who reposes in him with unbounded confidence, and whose great object of ambition it is to soften every care, to alleviate every calamity? What object can be more beautiful, or more engaging, than such a woman in the midst of her family, diffusing happiness on all around her? There, to use the words of the eloquent Rosseau, 'Son empire est un empire de douceur, d'addresse, et de complaisance; ses ordres sont des caresses, ses menaces sont des pleurs.'

Considerable use, however, might be made of the difference, in disposition, in feeling, and in situation, between the sexes, if in their intercourse with one another, those qualities which are most estimable in each were allowed their influence in a beneficial, not an extravagant degree. Were the men to drive from the society of the women gentleness, complaisance, sensibility; were the women to borrow from that of the men steadiness, deliberation, and fortitude; characters might be formed not less amiable than useful, not less engaging than enlightened. Wisdom could no longer be accused of severity, nor Sprightliness censured for levity. Virtue would assume her most winning as well as her most respectable form; and many votaries would be fixed by her smiles, whom her precepts had been unable to retain.

M

N° 24. SATURDAY, JULY 16, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

Dis ille adversis genitus, fatoque sinistro.
JUVENAL.

SIR,

I AM one of that class of men called Valetudinarians, people whose ordinary state of health is sickness, and who are never well enough to live without the aid of a physician. My father, who was a cadet of a family of quality, died of old age at thirty-four. I was born in the seventh month, and passed the first three years of my life in a basket lined with cotton, which was carefully placed by the fire-side of my mother's bed-chamber, and carried with great caution round the room once a day for the sake of exercise. In my fourth year I was allowed to breathe the fresh air in the arms of my nurse; and by the time I had reached my seventh, was able to walk round the parlour by the aid of a go-cart. But to record minutely the transactions of my infancy is not to my present purpose. Suffice it to say, that by the care of the excellent parent I have mentioned, and the power of medicine, I attained to the age of thirty-five; and bating my asthma and a nervous atrophy, enjoyed, thank God, a very tolerable state of health. At this unlucky period, death deprived me of the best of mothers, and left me a helpless orphan with a fortune of £20,000.

Among the gentlemen of the faculty, whom, from my unhappy constitution, it was necessary to keep in constant pay, there was one whose attentions

secmed to partake so much of personal attachment, that, I resolved to retain him in my house by a fixed salary. Dr. Doddipoll was a valetudinary like myself; and I had always experienced from him that tender condolence which the distressed feel for each other. His skill was very great—and he had at the same time so little of the quackery of his profession, that he openly derided all pretensions to mystery, and plainly declared, that he regarded his brethren of the faculty as solemn impostors. The long studies preparatory to this profession, and the extensive learning supposed to be necessary to attain a knowledge of its doctrines, he treated with the utmost ridicule. I have often heard him say, that he would engage to communicate the whole science of medicine to any person of common intellects in a couple of hours. My friend Doddipoll held but one maxim in physic, which was, that all diseases have their seat in the stomach, and proceed either from too great a richness and viscidity, or an extreme thinness of the gastric juices. The former was to be corrected by the use of attenuating food, the latter by that which is more nutritive. To the former class he referred my case: as it was evident, he said, from the thinness of my legs and the paleness of my complexion, that the juices were too thick to circulate freely through the minute lymphatics, and thus the parts were deprived of their due nourishment. His own case he decided to belong to the contrary class, as was apparent from the unwieldy size of his legs and belly, and the scurvy in his face. The thinness of the juices gave rise to a superabundant secretion, which distended all the vessels, occasioned too great a determination of blood to the head, and swelled the whole body. His regimen and mine were therefore totally opposite. To attenuate my juices, I was fed chiefly on skim-milk, panada, and vegetables; while

Doddipoll, to correct the tenuity of his fluids, was restricted to beef and pudding, turkey and chine, &c. a tankard of mild ale, and a bottle of old claret. You will forgive my use of medical terms, Mr. Lounger; they are, strictly speaking, my mother-tongue, and I cannot easily express myself without them.

My family consisted at this time, besides the doctor and myself, of my man-servant Peter, and my maid Betty, two honest and faithful domestics; and I may say with great truth, there never was a better regulated or more orderly household. It was Peter's province to rub me down in the morning with the flesh-brush, to make my water-dock tea, to attend me at noon with the dumb-bells, and measure out my hour of exercise, make up my electuraries, cook my sago and panada, boil my water-gruel and white-wine whey, air my flannel shirt, and put me to bed. Betty's services were chiefly dedicated to my worthy friend the Doctor, who always gave her the commendation of an excellent and discreet young woman, and perfectly acquainted with all the duties of an handmaid.

Such, Sir, was the course of my life, during those which may be termed my halcyon days; when, ah, the inconstancy of human affairs! my friend, my companion, my Esculapius, was carried off by a fit of apoplexy. The poor Doctor—how shall I describe the melancholy scene! A fillet of veal stood upon the table.—It was stuffed, which was his favourite way of dressing it. He looked at it for some time, muttered something about butter and ornages, fell back in his chair, and expired.

Alas, poor Doddipoll!

On this melancholy occasion, I had many consolatory visits from my friends and relations. Among

these last, I was much struck with the tender sympathy of one of my female cousins, the Honourable Miss Angelica Tempest. This Lady, though past her bloom, had still the appearance of a fine woman. Though she had no fortune, having had an excellent education, she wanted none of the accomplishments of a Lady of fashion. But what struck me most in her character was the sensibility of her disposition, and that affectionate concern she shewed for all sort of distresses. She would often sit by me for hours, listen to my complaints with the most sympathising attention, and inquire into their particular symptoms with the tenderness of a sister, and the solicitude of a sick-nurse. To cut the matter short, Sir, she so far won upon me, that in an evil hour, and tempted I believe by the devil, I threw myself at her feet, and proposed marriage. She did not disdain my suit; and after a reasonable time for the adjustment of all punctilios, we became man and wife.

For the first week all went smoothly enough; but at the end of that period I began to perceive a rising spirit of innovation, which gave me some disquiet. I had made my account with some changes; as the family-establishment which was suitable to my bachelor state might be thought too contracted for that into which I had now entered. I therefore readily enough acquiesced in the proposal of hiring a larger house, and adding two to the number of our domestics; but it was with much concern I learned that the reform was to be begun by the dismission of the trusty Peter and the discreet Mrs. Betty. It was in vain I urged the merits of both, their long services, and perfect acquaintance with the complicated system of my poor constitution, its wants, and its regimen. My wife declared, that to attend to these was no less her duty than her pleasure, and that, while she lived, no other hands than her own should touch

the body of her dearest Lord. It was however very soon perceived, that in this she had undertaken a task more laborious than she was aware of. The exercise of the flesh-brush was found so fatiguing that on the third morning, in pure compassion to her, I proposed to make trial of one of our new footmen. This rascal, who seemed endowed with the strength of Herculcs, began as if he had been currying a centaur, and actually dislocated my shoulder at the first experiment.

During a painful confinement to my chair, which was the consequence of this unlucky accident, it was not unnatural to have expected that my wife, who was so remarkable for the tender feelings, would have exercised her utmost assiduity in administering consolation under a disaster, of which it was plain she had been the cause. But what, Sir, was the method she took to comfort me? Why, by endeavouring to persuade me that there was nothing the matter with me. She had the cruelty to tell me, that I had no other disease than vapours, and undertook, with equal folly and presumption, that she would completely cure me in the space of a month. A pragmatical coxcomb of a physician, who now supplied the place of my late worthy friend, declared my wife's notion of my disorder to be altogether just, and concurred with her in opinion as to the method of cure. Moderate exercise was ordered for bracing my nerves, and company and amusements were prescribed for keeping up my spirits.

For these purposes the chariot was ordered to attend every morning immediately after breakfast; and, for the benefit of air and exercise, I was rattled for four hours upon the stones, through a tour of twenty visits, and the complete circuit of all the mercers and milliners shops in town. My dearest contrived to have a select company of a few friends to dine

with us every day, and a small whist-party in the evening, except on Monday, which was our private concert, and every second Thursday, when she had a route of six tables. Once a week I was conveyed to the play, and had the pleasure of seeing the Siddons, at the repeated hazard of suffocation: but here, I own, it alleviated my feelings to observe the greatest part of the audience undergoing, without compulsion, apparently the same agonies with myself.

I always delighted, Sir, in tranquility. Judge, therefore, of my mortification, in now finding that my life was destined to be one continued scene of tumult and turmoil. We are informed, that in the days of witchcraft, when it was the misfortune of any old woman to incur that imputation, it was customary with her accusers to prevent her intercourse with the devil, which was supposed to be chiefly during sleep, by keeping her continually awake. My wife, Sir, seems to hold some opinions very analogous to that now mentioned. Apprehending a state of quiet to be of the worst consequences to my disorder, it is her constant study to guard against and prevent it by every possible means. As, with all her industry to find employment for the day, there must be some few moments unoccupied, she has provided several domestic companions of such of the animal tribe as are most averse to rest and silence. We have three dogs, who wage eternal warfare with as many cats. A parrot is suspended in the stair-case, a magpie in the anti-chamber, and six Canary birds in the parlour. A monkey, I am informed, has been commissioned, and is actually upon the road; but this additional curse I believe I shall effectually prevent, having taken measures to have him waylaid and assassinated.

But these are the least of my grievances. I must now inform you of somewhat more serious. I have

of late but too good reason to believe, that my loving spouse has actually formed a plot against my life. Exercise, Sir, and change of air, have been the pretence for frequent expeditions to the country, with one or two friends, which she calls parties of pleasure, but which I have generally found to end in some cursed disaster, which has gone near to be my death. I have been twice caught in a thunder-storm on horse-back, thrice in a hurricane upon the water, four times broke down in a carriage, and the last time compelled to ride ten miles in the night air upon a hard trotting coach-horse. I understand it is now resolved by the advice of the family-physician above mentioned, to set out in a few days hence upon a tour through the north of England, and in our way to make trial of the mineral waters of Buxton, Matlock, or Harrowgate. What may be the issue of this expedition, is hid in the womb of fate. The design of it, however, is sufficiently apparent; and I cannot help regarding it as intended for my *coup de grace*. If I survive it, you may once again hear from me; if not, you may perhaps bestow a tear on the memory of the ill-fated

JEREMIAH DY-SOON.

N° 25. SATURDAY, JULY 23, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR,

THOUGH I presume, from your account of yourself, that you occasionally visit the Theatre, and go there like your friend Colonel Caustic, to see the plays a

well as the Company; I do not observe that you have yet favoured us with any remarks on the entertainments of the stage. This I regard in a manner as part of your duty. Whatever has so powerful an effect in forming the manners as the Theatre, falls properly within the department of one who wishes to mark their progress. Even as a mere amusement, that which occupies so great a space in the time of the idle, should attract the notice of the Lounger. The field, you know, Sir, is wide: for even in the best of our English pieces there is great room for improvement, and much to be found fault with. The Fair Penitent, for example, which stands high in the list, is in many respects imperfect, if not reprehensible; which censure that I may justify (as also to take a share in the labour which I exhort you to,) let me attempt to shew wherein it is that the piece is chiefly defective.

For this purpose, we must first direct our attention to the characters; which are by no means such as to support or promote the interest of the situation. The heroine himself is very far from being an amiable or unexceptionable lady. Her slight pretensions to the title of Penitent have often been remarked; and indeed the whole style of her character, exclusive of the objections that lie against it in a moral view, is of that fierce, unbending, and unfeminine sort, which we cannot easily pity in misfortune or forgive in error. For the weakness and the guilt of her love, she has not that apology which some unfortunate females derive from the bewitching qualities of their seducers. The object of her passion is a vain, a profligate, and undisguised libertine, whose treatment of her had been so utterly base and unmanly, as even to make her dread that the secret of her favours might not be safely lodged with him. The 'fineness of his form,' is the only attractive

quality we perceive about him; a motive to love which sinks the lady equally in our estimation of her virtue, and in our opinion of her understanding.

If such is the impression that Calista makes on her first appearance, her conduct in the course of the piece by no means removes it. Her behaviour to Horatio, when he intimates his suspicions of her guilty correspondence, and holds up to her her own letter in support of the charge, is the very height of effrontery; as indeed the attempt which follows, to turn the sword of her injured husband against the bosom of his best friend, because he had detected her falsehood, is a stroke of wickedness (for it deserves no gentler name,) which deprives her of all title to sympathy. We remain accordingly, till the beginning of the fith act, almost indifferent about her fate; or perhaps we rather enjoy her difficulties and embarrassments. Then indeed, after her shame has been divulged; when the object of her guilty flame is now no more; when she is set before us, forsaken of every friend, and without prospect of peace but in the grave; when now the stormy passions that had transported her, having subsided, are followed by settled sorrow; and her haughty soul, bowed down by misfortunes, at length submits to own that she had done amiss, to intreat forgiveness, and to be grateful for a little tenderness:—in these circumstances our tears begin to take her part, as they would that of any object, however undeserving, reduced to so wretched a situation, and throwing herself entirely on our pity. The scene between her and Altamont, where she makes confession of her own demerit, and prays for a companion to him more deserving of his virtues, is interesting: and still more so that which precedes it between her and Sciolto; which is indeed by far the best in the play. We should mistake however in attributing its effect to

our interest in Calista; for the venerable good old man has by much the greatest share in it; whose affection for his child, contending with his rigid sense of honour, forms a spectacle that draws at once our admiration and our love. Sciolto, indeed, is the most interesting, as well as most respectable person of the drama; his situation, his character, and his feelings, equally inspire our reverence for his virtue, and our pity for his misfortunes.

If the character of Calista offend us by its fierceness, that of Altamont disgusts us by its insignificance. Of him we know little more than this, which is far from being enough, that he is an ardent admirer of Calista. We are told indeed by the other persons of the piece, that he is 'an excellent young man,' and inherits all his father's virtues. But these encomiums by his friends make him no favourite with the spectator, who knows nothing of his father, and is attached only by what he himself sees, and observes, and finds reason for; not by what he hears related, or is desired to believe. Now, what of Altamont is presented, is boyish, silly, and extravagant; we neither sympathise with his joy for the acquisition, nor in his despair for the loss of a mistress who receives his adoration with such indifference, and yields him her hand with such unwillingness. We feel the meanness as well as indelicacy of his situation, and are tempted to despise him for accepting a bride on such mortifying conditions.

When love, as in the case of Altamont, is the only prominent part of a characterr, its object should be rendered worthy of its ardour. Neither for Altamont's affection for Calista, nor Calista's for Lothario, has the poet furnished such an apology. The first is mean, though it may be honest; the last is nearly as contemptible, and much less pure; here it is silly, there it is criminal.

Horatio's character is of a better stamp: but he is not a principal in the action. At the same time, the behaviour of this 'far fam'd friend of noble Altamont,' is not in every instance just what we expect of him; especially in the first meeting between him and that unfortunate youth, after the full discovery of Calista's guilt: on which occasion, instead of considering the bitter disappointment his young friend had met with, and preventing him by an unsolicited forgiveness, which is what we look for from the calm and generous temper of Horatio; he abuses and revilcs him with all the sharpness of an enemy, and can hardly be won to forget his offence.

There is one other person of the Drama, whom we had almost forgot to take notice of; a lady too; Lavinia, the spouse of Horatio; a very deserving person doubtless, as well as her brother Altamont, but withal extremely insipid; and so much the less allowed for, that she is quite unnecessary; her presence serving only to introduce two dull scenes of conjugal endearment between her and her husband.

The conduct of the piece, though by no means so exceptionable as the manners, is not without a fault. We may observe of many English plays, and some of these among the best in the language, Mr. Home's *Douglas*, for example, that they are languid towards the conclusion, owing to the inability of the Poet to suspend the unravelling of his story; or, as the Poet will tell us, owing to the arbitrary rule which prescribes, that a Tragedy shall not consist of fewer acts than five; to comply with which, he is obliged either to continue the story beyond its natural and proper term, or else to swell the piece with artificial scenes, that contribute little to heighten our interest, or to advance the action. The embarrassment of this rule has been felt by the author of the Fair Penitent. After the death of Lothario, which

happens as early as the beginning of the fourth act, he is evidently at a loss to fill up the remainder of the play, and not a little puzzled how to keep the Heroine alive till the end of it. This was indeed no small difficulty; as it not easy to imagine what should restrain so proud and violent a personage one moment from escaping despair and infamy, and setting herself at liberty, after 'the broad shame' of her discovery with Lothario. Mr. Rowe seems by no means successful in the attempt. Soon after Lothario's fall, we are informed that a tumult has arisen in consequence of it among the partisans of that young nobleman, and that Sciolto's palace is attacked. The old man goes forth to repel their violence: the event we are never told of; but we must suppose it favourable, as he afterwards appears in safety. Horatio is in like manner assaulted in the streets: but this scuffle produces not, more than the former, any consequence whatever; if it be not, that Lavinia comes forward to distress us with her alarms about the safety of her Lord. We are next presented with the long superfluous scene of reconciliation between him and Altamont. Follows, in the beginning of the fifth act, the spectacle of Lothario's dead body, with the music, the book, the bones, and the black hangings; by what means so furnished out, or for what service intended, it is not easy to discover. And in the end, Sciolto, who had given orders to have his gates well guarded, and had summoned his friends to attend him in his palace, having, against all probability, stolen out alone and unattended, on some errand unknown to any body, receives his death by means which we have not seen prepared, and in a manner which we do not understand. It is this circumstance that determines Calista's resolution; for though there had before this been much talking about death, and a great deal of preparation for it, still she

had unaccountably delayed the execution of a purpose, which she had from the beginning prepared us to expect whenever her guilt should be discovered; and which the desperate and horrid circumstances attending the discovery should have confirmed and accelerated. Thus, in the middle of the fourth act, a new spring of movement is brought into play; and the action is afterwards forced on, not by the passions of the principal personages, which had till then advanced it, and which alone ought to do that duty, but by the party-zeal of (we know not who) Lothario's friends: a power which we may suppose, if we please, but which we feel ourselves under no manner of necessity to suppose. Farther, the death of Sciolto is not well interwoven with that fresh thread, detached from the texture of the piece as it is, but figures as a mere accident; insomuch that we are almost equally surprised on being told of it, as if we were to hear that he had dropped down in a fit of apoplexy.

With all this, the play has beauties that must be relished by every reader of taste. It is particularly eminent for elegance and richness of expression throughout. The descriptions (with which it abounds) are equal to any in the language. And the subordinate degrees of all the passions, especially the amiable, are touched for the most part both with spirit and with delicacy. The high pathetic, however, is not any where to be met with in it (if we except one stroke, in the scene already taken notice of between Calista and her father. We must particularly remark the want of genuine pathos in Calista's noted soliloquy at the beginning of the fifth act, where that lady is by far too much mistress of herself, and discourses in a style very foreign to her circumstance: instead of being lost in the thoughts of her situation, she remarks on the scene, as a spec-

tator might, that here is ample room for meditation. She tries the book, and descants upon the vanity of its precepts, she listens to the music, and approves the style of it: she expatiates on the pageantry of the death's head and bones; while the corse of the loved youth who had wrought all her troubles is noticed in fewer words than are bestowed on any of the other topics; and these words only an exclamation at the ghastlines of its appearance. This composure and unconcern are by no means what we look for from the ardent spirit of Calista, sitting at midnight by the dead body of her 'dear betrayer.' She had loved Lothario with passion; and her fondness for him had confessedly a little while ago full possession of her breast.—Only a few hours have passed since he was slaughtered in her presence. His faults are now expatiated in his blood.—She was a woman, not a Cato; and she had hitherto been represented as of a violent temper, rather than firm: so that we now indulge in the full hope to hear the genuine voice of grief and despair uttering not a single word but what immediately relates to her situation, and is suggested by it. It is not enough that she tells us the mind may here burst with thinking, and that she is full of anguish which no discipline can cure; nor that she feed the phrenzy of her soul with solemn sounds, and invoke the infernal gods to match the horror around her. A thousand such fanciful exclamations express not truly any distres. They are not the language of anguish, which dwells, like every other strong feeling, steadily on its object, and is occupied with that alone, and not with talking of itself. It is the very griefs of Calista, the sources of pain opened afresh by the sight of Lothario, as he there lies,—compassion for his fate,—revived affection for his person,—the present scene campared with their stolen interview of love,—the desolation she has spread

around her,—her despair of relief;—these are the subjects we expect to see pursuing one another in her thoughts: and till these appear, say Calista what she may about her agonies, we are neither disposed to believe nor to pity them. Yours, &c.

THEATRICUS.

To shew that I take in good part the suggestion of my correspondent at the beginning of his letter, I will add to his observations on the tragedy in question a few lines to inform him that I was one of the audience who attended its representation some evenings ago, and received that very high entertainment which the performance of Mrs. Siddons always affords. Amidst the defects which Theatricus very justly remarks in the character of Calista, there is, however, a variety of high and stormy passion, which gives scope to the astonishing powers of this incomparable actress. These she displayed so forcibly, that some who had not investigated the character so closely as my correspondent, thought 'she o'erstepp'd the modesty of nature in the force and whirlwind of her passion.' But let it be remembered, that Calista is a woman haughty and impetuous in the highest degree, and that the defence of guilt is always loud in proportion as it is hollow. In this, indeed lay the admirable art with which she played the scene with Horatio; she rose in violence as the accusation was pressed upon her, and met his reproach and admonition with the fierceness of resentment and of pride, struggling with the anguish of guilt and of shame. Nor did she fail to give the Poet (as is usual with her) some merit not his own, by infusing into the latter part of the play that tenderness of which she knows so well how to unlock the springs. In

the last interview with her father, particularly, and in her dying speech to Altamont, she conveyed this impression so strongly, that we quite forgot the blame which our justice should have laid upon Calista, and our tears flowed for her misfortunes with all the interest of compassion, and all the consciousness of virtue.

But the language of encomium is so familiar to this Lady, that it were trite to continue it. In recalling her performance, I tried a much more difficult task, to remember some defect. One trifling error I imagined I discovered. In marking the sentiments of contempt and insolence, she sometimes used a voice, and assumed a countenance, rather of too familiar a kind. When she uttered the following lines,

> 'And blesses her good stars that she is virtuous'—
> 'Is this the famous friend of Altamont ?
> '————a tale-bearing officious fellow ?'
> 'Who guiltless dies because her fool ran mad.'—

And the evening before, in Lady Macbeth,

> ————'Was the Hope drunk
> 'In which you dress'd yourself ?—
> 'Letting *I dare not* wait upon *I would*
> 'Like the old cat i'the adage.'

Methought in her speaking of such passages, there was a tone and look more allied to the Comic than the Tragic Muse, and hardly dignified enough for the importance of the situation, or the high feeling of the moment in which they were pronounced. It was an observation of some of the great French actors upon Garrick, that he spoke admirably well the language of passion, but not quite as a hero would speak it. Though one might trace something of the *costume* of Paris in this remark, yet undoubtedly there is a form which passion puts on, different

in different situations. Perhaps, too, there is a certain deception in our ideas of what the station or character of the person should impress upon his feelings, which the very truth and genuine colour of nature may sometimes offend. We have all our prejudices, like Partridge, though they may not be altogether so simple. It is very seldom, however, that we have any room for a complaint of this sort. It is only in a Garrick or a Siddons that nature presses so close on us, that she 'galls our kibe.'

Z

N° 26 SATURDAY, JULY 30, 1785.

I HAVE observed, that the authors of former periodical publications have commonly given some account of their life and situation in the world. Hitherto, 'for certain good causes and considerations,' I have been very sparing in these particulars. Stepping the other day into a box in the Playhouse, I was very much entertained with overhearing part of a conversation between two young ladies. I found they had been talking about the Lounger; and at the time I chanced to come in, they were disputing whether the author was a married or an unmarried man. 'I don't trust much,' said one of the young ladies, to his own hint in a late paper; authors I know take liberties that way: but he certainly must be a bachelor; for had he been married, he would before now have told us something about his wife and children.' —'No,' says the other, 'he has certainly a wife, and children too, I believe, otherwise he could not have

described domestic situations so well as he does; he could not'—Here she mentioned some of my papers in a style which it would not be proper for me to repeat, the two ladies at last agreed to refer their dispute to an elderly lady, Mrs. B. who sat by them. 'My dear,' said Mrs. B. addressing herself to the young lady next her, 'if he is not married, he certainly ought to be.'

I am sorry that for the present I must leave this matter in the same uncertainty in which Mrs. B. has left it; possibly at some other time I may clear up the point, and amuse my readers with some other incidents in my life.

Meanwhile it is to my present purpose to observe, that, whether a married man or a bachelor, there is nothing in either of these situations which can incapacitate me from carrying on my present undertaking. In the course of my observations, I have had occasion to remark, that there are Loungers in all situations; some with a wife and family at home, and others who, when they leave their house, may put the key in their pockets, all their friends and acquaintance being without doors.

I remember a story of two gentlemen who were very fond of the game of backgammon; and being both excellent players, and nearly a match for each other, seldom met but they fell to it with great keenness. One evening they encountered at a coffee-house, and continued playing during the whole course of the night. The saunterers in the coffee-room, who were numerous when they first began, had all dropped off. One man only continued to sit by them, and had his eye fixed the whole time with a steady look on the backgammon table. A nice point in the game having occurred, and the players being unable to settle it, were likely to get into some heat. It was agreed to refer the dispute to the gen-

tleman looker-on. The appeal, therefore, being made to him, he told them he could not determine it, for he knew nothing at all about the game.—— 'What, sit here all night, and know nothing of the game!'—'Yes; I have a wife at home.'

Though from this story, and from a variety of observations of my own, I have no doubt that there are many Loungers among the married men, which may be accounted for from a variety of reasons; yet, as far as I can discover, the number of Loungers among the bachelors greatly exceeds those among the other class. Whoever walks the streets of this populous city, will see a number of bachelor Loungers prowling wherever he goes.

At the very moment in which I write this, I see passing by the window of the parlour where I sit, Captain N. a Lounger of this denomination. Thirty years ago, I am told the Captain was one of the gayest and most fashionable men in town. He entered early into the army; but an indolent diposition, and a little parliamentary interest, which he had by accident acquired, induced him to give up all prospects of rising in his profession, and content himself with the office of deputy-governor of a garrison, with a tolerable, though not large appointment.

The Captain's garrison not requiring his residence, he fixed his habitation in this city, where he has since continued. He was then about thirty-five years of age, with a good appearance, good temper, good spirits, attentive to his dress, and circumspect in his conduct. The Captain sung a good song; and, when occasion required, could swallow a sufficient quantity of liquor. He had sense enough never to say any thing that was foolish, and understanding enough to make himself pass for having more understanding than he had. He took care ne-

ver to offend; and, while he was always pleased with holding a second place in any company he was in, he never created envy or disquiet by aiming at the first. The Captain was no party-man, having made an observation, that there were as good dinners among the Whigs as among the Tories.

With these qualifications, about thirty years ago, Captain N. was a welcome guest at every table in town. He filled up a place with a most becoming propriety; and while he never diminished the pleasure of any company, he most commonly added to its enjoyment. His mornings were spent in paying visits: and though he might now and then disturb the family-œconomy of a Mrs. Careful*, and interrupt her instructions to her daughters; yet there were so many persons as idle as himself, that he could easily contrive so to bestow his visits as to have them received with a welcome face. These visits were sure to produce some future dinners, and these future dinners ended in as many suppers.

Thirty years have made a great change in poor N.'s situation. He is no longer the gay-looking fashionable man he was; his legs are shrivelled; his face bears upon it the marks of bumpers; his voice is broken, and the whole man has the appearance of a superannuated beau.

The tables where he used to dine and to sup are no longer open to receive him. Death has removed some of his friends, change of residence others; in some places his chair is occupied by younger men, and in others it is occupied by nobody at all. Poor N. dares no longer offer his hand to conduct a young lady through the crowd in an assembly-room, lest the lady should show a desire to be conducted by some younger beau. He is no longer invited to dine

* Vide No. 8.

with my Lady Rumpus, that he may attend her to the theatre, my Lady having bespoke some other attendant; and he is no longer *Croupier* at Lord E.'s, his place there being filled up by Tom Toastwell.

In this situation, the Captain is frequently obliged to go home and dine by himself on a cold chicken; or he is forced to spend his evenings in the coffee-house, amidst the hubbub of waiters, and the hum of coffee-house politicians, over a bit of toasted cheese and a can of punch, because he is afraid of the solitariness and want of stir in his own home.

At a dancing-school ball, where I happened to be not long ago, I was struck with the solitary figure of Captain N. looking demure, and stuck up in a corner. It attracted my attention the more, from the circumstance of observing, not far from him, my friend Mr. H. This gentleman is a Lounger, like Mr. N. and with fewer abilities to support the character. He possesses, however, a good plain understanding, which nobody can despise, and nobody envies, and obtains the good will and regard of all his companions and acquaintance, by an honest openness of disposition, and a social warmth of heart. He married early in life a lady agreeable in her person, though not a beauty; possessed of good understanding, though not a wit; and endowed with very amiable dispositions. By her he has a family of very fine children, for the purpose of whose education he now lives in town, and only visits his paternal estate now and then to superintend the management, in which he is reckoned very skilful. H— saunters like N;—but he has that easy good-humoured look, that results from his being independent of the idlers around him; from which, if he should tire of them, his house is open to receive him. His house is not splendid, but he contrives to make it hospitable;

and the happiness of the family-scene which his guests now and then witness, gives him a certain rank, a certain respectability in life, which neither the abilities nor the accommodating complacence of N— could ever procure him. At that same ball I mentioned, it would have done one's heart good to have seen how Mr. H.'s eyes glistened, when he saw two of his daughters make a most elegant appearance in a cotillon, and heard every one around the place where he and Mrs. H. were seated, asking whose pretty children these were. He led them out of the room himself, and was particularly careful that they should be protected from the cold air in getting out. I went away at the same time; and we left poor N— in his corner, with the same grave face as ever, seemingly weary of being there, but afraid to go home.

After all, N.'s fate is a hard one; for on the whole he has many good qualities, which might have been put to a very good account. What is worst, he is now sensible of this himself.—I knew not whether to smile or to cry, when, the other day, I heard him say, he was now growing old; but one comfort he had, that die when he would, he would not leave one sad heart behind him on that account.—'I shall slip out of the world,' said he, 'without being missed.'

N° 27. SATURDAY, AUGUST 6, 1785.

Maxima pars vatum, pater, et juvenes patre digni,
Decipimur specie recti. HOR.

In forming the minds and regulating the conduct of men, nothing seems to be of greater importance than a proper system of what may be termed *domestic morality;* the science of those relative duties, which do not apply only to particular situations. to large fortunes, to exalted rank, to extensive influence, but which constitute that part and character in life which almost every one is called to perform.

Of all above the lower ranks, of all who claim the station or the feelings of a gentleman, the knowledge of this science is either inculcated by family precept and example, or is endeavoured to be instilled by reading. In the latter case, the works made use of for that purpose are either purely didactic, which speak the language of authoritative wisdom; historical, which hold forth the example of past events to the judgment; or they are of that sort which are calculated to mould the heart and the manners through the medium of the imagination. Of this last class, the principal are stories or novels, I have in a former paper delivered a few general remarks, calculated to ascertain their moral tendency. In this I propose extending my consideration to Dramatic writing; and, as it is nearest to the Novel, at least to that species which I principally considered in the paper alluded to, I shall begin with a similar examination of Tragedy.

The engines which Tragedy professes to use for moral instruction are the passions. The father of dramatic criticism has told us, that Tragedy 'purges the passions by exciting them:' a proposition, which from its short apothegmatical form, is subject to considerable obscurity. A modern writer, in his defence of Tragedy as a moral exhibition, explains its meaning, by the analogy of the Spartan custom of making their slaves drunk, and shewing them in that beastly state to their children, in order to inspire a detestation for the vice of intemperance. But if this is to furnish us with an illustration of Aristotle's assertion, I am afraid it will not aid the cause of Tragedy as a school of morals. It was from the previous contempt of the rank and manners of the drunkard, that the Spartan boy was to form his estimate of drunkenness. The vice of a slave could hardly fail to disgust him. But had they shewn him the vice itself, how loathsome and degrading soever in its own nature, in a person of superior respect and estimation, what would have been the consequence? The fairest answer may be drawn from the experience of those countries where freemen get drunk, where senators and leaders of armies are sometimes intoxicated. The youths who behold these examples the oftenest are not the least liable to follow them. I am afraid it is even so with Tragedy. Scenes presenting passions and vices, round which the poet throws the veil of magnanimity, which he decorates with the pomp of verse, with the splendor of eloquence, familiarise the mind to their appearance, and take from it the natural disgust which the crimes, presented in their native form, would certainly excite. Cruelty, revenge and murder, are often the attributes of the hero; for he must always be the hero on whom the principal stress of the action lies. What punishment awaits, or what misfortunes attend his crimes, is little

to the purpose; if the villain is the prominent figure of the piece, he will be the hero of the Tragedy, as the robber, though he is about to be hanged, is the hero of the trial or the execution. But even of the nobler characters does not the morality of sentiment often yield to the immorality of situation? Treachery is often the fruit of wisdom and of resolution; murder, an exertion of valour; and suicide, the resource of virtuous affliction. It will be remembered, that it is not so much from what the hero says, as from what he does, that an impression is drawn. The repentant lines which Cato speaks when he is dying, are never regarded. It is the dagger only we remember, that dagger by which he escaped from chains, and purchased immortality.

But the leading passion of modern Tragedy is one to which Aristotle could scarce have meant his rule to apply; because in ancient Tragedy it was almost unknown. The passion I allude to is love. The manners and society of modern times necessarily led to this change in the Drama. For the observation which some authors have made is perfectly just, that the sentiments of the Stage will always be such as are flattering, rather than corrective of national manners and national failings; superstition in Greece, gallantry in France, freedom and courage in England. In every popular exhibition this must be the case. Even the sacredness and authority of the Pulpit is not exempted from its influence. In polite chapels, preachers exhort to morality: in crowded churches of less fashionable people, they enlarge on doctrinal subjects, on faith and sanctification. But the very existence of the Stage depends on that public opinion which it is not to reform but to conciliate: and Dr. Johnson's expression is not the less true for its quaintness;

'They that live to please, must please to live.'

To this necessary conformity to the manners of the audience is owing the introduction of love into almost all our dramatic compositions; and those, as might be expected, are most in favour with the young, where this passion is allowed the most extensive influence, and the most unlimited power. It was this which, when it was the fashion for genteel people to pay attention to Tragedies, drew such audiencies to Lee's *Theodosius*, and to Dryden's *Anthony* and *Cleopatra*, where the length of the speeches, and the thinness of the incidents, would have been as tiresome to them as a sermon, had it not been for a tenderness and an extravagance of that passion, which every girl thought she could feel, and believed she could understand. The moral consequences of such a Drama it is unnecessary to question. Even where this passion is purified and refined to its utmost degree, it may be fairly held, that every species of composition, whether narrative or dramatic, which places the only felicity of life in successful love, is unfavourable to the strength and purity of a young mind. It holds forth that single object to the ambition and pursuit of both sexes, and thus tends to enfeeble and repress every other exertion. This increases a source of weakness and corruption, which it is the business of a good instructor to correct and overcome, by setting before the minds of his pupils other objects, other attainments, of a nobler and less selfish kind. But in that violence, in that tyranny of dominion, with which Love is invested in many of our Tragedies, it overbears every virtue and every duty. The obligations of justice and of humanity sink before it. The king, the chief, the patriot, forgets his people, his followers, and his country; while parents and children mention the dearest objects of natural attachment only to lead them in the triumph of their love.

It is the business of Tragedy to exhibit the passions, that is, the weaknesses of men. Ancient Tragedy shewed them in a simple manner; virtue and vice were strongly and distinctly marked, wisdom and weakness were easily discriminated; and though vice might be sometimes palliated, and weakness excused, the spectator could always discover the character of each. But in the modern drama there is an uncertain sort of outline, a blended colouring, by which the distinction of these objects is frequently lost. The refinement of modern audiencies calls for shades of character more delicate than those which the Stage formerly exhibited; the consequence is, that the bounds of wright and wrong are often so uncertainly marked as not to be easily distinguished; and if the powers of poetry, or the eloquence of sentiment, should be on the side of the latter, it will require a greater firmness of mind than youth or inexperience is master of, to resist it.

Reason condemns every sort of weakness; but passion, enthusiasm, and sickly sensibility, have dignified certain weaknesses with the name of amiable; and the young, of whom some are susceptible, and others affect susceptibility, think it often an honour to be subject to their control. In Tragedy, or tragic writing, they often find such characters for their imitation. Such characters being various, complicated, and fluctuating, are the properest for Tragedy. The poets have not neglected to avail themselves of that circumstance: their dramas are filled with such characters, who shift the hue and colour of their minds, according to the change of situation or the variety of incident; or sometimes, whose minds, in the hands of the poet, produce that change, and create that variety. Wisdom and virtue, simple, uniform, and unchanging, only superior artists can draw, and superior spectators enjoy.

N° 28. SATURDAY, AUGUST 13, 1785.

Continuation of the Remarks upon Tragedy.

THE high heroic virtue we see exemplified in Tragedy, warms the imagination and swells the mind; but being distant from the ordinary feelings and exertions of life, has, I suspect, but little influence upon the conduct. On the contrary, it may be fairly doubted, whether this play of the fancy, in the the walks of virtue and benevolence, does not lessen the exertion of those qualities in practice and reality. '*Indocilis privata loqui*,' said Lucan, of Cæsar: So in some measure, he who is deeply conversant in the tragic phrase, in the swelling language of compassion, of generosity, and of love, finding no parallel in his common intercourse with mankind, will not so readily open his heart to the calls on his feeling, which the vulgar distresses of his fellow-creatures, or the ordinary relations of life, may occasion. In stage misfortunes, in fancied sufferings, the drapery of the figure hides its form; and real distress, coming in a homely and unornamented state, disgusts the eye which had poured its tears over the hero of tragic misery, or the martyr of romantic woe. Real calamity offends with its coarseness, and therefore is not produced on the scene, which exhibits in its stead the fantastic griefs of a delicate and high-wrought sensibility. Lillo, in his Fatal Discovery, presented extreme poverty as the distress of the scene; and the moral of his piece was to inculcate, that poverty was not to be shunned, nor wealth pursued, at the ex-

pence of honesty and virtue. A modern audience did not relish a distress so real, but gave their tears to the widow of St. Valori, who was mad for the loss of a husband killed twenty years before. From the same cause, the *Gamester*, one of the best and most moral of our latter tragedies, though successively represented by the greatest players, has never become popular. And even now the part of Mrs. Beverly (the first character of the first actress in the world) is performed to indifferent houses.

The tragic poet in striving to distress his hero that he may move his audience: it is not his business to equalize the affliction to the evil that occasions it; the effect is what he is to exhibit, which he is to clothe in the flowing language of poetry, and the high colouring of imagination; and if the cause be not very disproportionate indeed, the reader, or the spectator, will not find fault with it. Castalio, in the *Orphan* (a play so grossly immoral, that it were unfair in me to quote it, except as illustrative of this single argument,) is mad with anguish and with rage, because his wife's maid refuses him access to her apartment, according to the previous appointment they had made; and Orosmane, in *Zayre* remains '*immobile, et sa langue glacée*,' because his bride begs him to defer their marriage for a day. Yet these were disappointments which the lover of Otway, and much more the hero of Voltaire, might surely have borne with greater fortitude.

If we are to apply all this in example, it seems to have a tendency to weaken our mind to our own sufferings, without opening it to the sufferings of others. The real evils which the dignity of the scene hides from our view, are those which we ought to pity in our neighbours; the fantastic and imaginary distresses which it exhibits, are those we are apt to indulge in ourselves. Here then Tragedy adds to the

list of our calamities, without increasing the catalogue of our virtues.

As Tragedy thus dignifies the distresses, so it elevates the actions of its personages, their virtues, and their vices. But this removes virtue at a greater distance from us, and brings vice nearer: it exalts the first to a point beyond our imitation, and ennobles the latter to a degree above our abhorrence. Shakespeare, who generally discriminates strongly the good and ill qualities of his characters, has yet exhibited a Macbeth, a tyrant and a murderer, whom we are disposed rather to pity than to hate. 'Modern Tragedy,' says a celebrated critic, 'has become more a school of virtue than the ancient, by being more the theatre of passion: an Othello, hurried by jealousy to murder his innocent wife: a Jaffier, ensnared by resentment and want, to engage in a conspiracy, and then stung with remorse and involved in ruin; a Siffredi, through the deceit which he employs for public-spirited ends, bringing destruction on all whom he loved: these are the examples which Tragedy now displays, by means of which it inculcates on men the proper government of their passions.' I am afraid, if we appeal to the feelings of the audience at the conclusion of any of those pieces, we shall not find the effect to be what is here supposed. Othello we rather pity for his jealousy, than hate as a murderer. With Jaffier and his associates we are undoubtedly leagued against the rulers of Venice; and even the faith and tenderness of Belvidera hardly make us forgive her for betraying her secret. The sentiments of Siffredi, however wise and just, are disregarded where they impeach the dignity and supereminence of love. His deceit indeed is blamed, which is said to be the moral of the piece; but it is blamed because it hindered the union of Tancred and Sigismunda, which, from the very beginning of the

play, is the object in which the reader or spectator is interested. Reverse the situation, make it a contrivance to defeat the claim of the tyrant's daughter, to give the throne to Tancred, and to place Sigismunda there at his side, the audience would admire its ingenuity, and rejoice in its success.

In the mixture of a plot, and amidst the variety of situations, where weaknesses are flattered and passions indulged, at the same time that virtues are displayed and duties performed, one set of readers will enjoy the pleasure of the first, while those only who have less need to be instructed will seize the instruction of the latter. When Marcus dies for his country, the ladies in the side boxes only consider his death as removing the bar to the marriage of Lucia with his brother Portius.

In Tragedy as in Novel, which is sometimes a kind of tragedy, the author is obliged in justification of weak characters, to elevate villainous ones, or to throw round their vices a bewitching address and captivating manners. Lovelace is made a character which the greater number of girls admire, in order to justify the seduction of Clarissa. Lothario, though very inferior, is something of the same cast, to mitigate the crime of Calista. The story would not be probable else;—granted: but in proportion to the art of the poet in rendering it probable, he heightens the immoral effect of which I complain.

As the incidents must be formed, so must the sentiments be introduced according to the character and condition of the person speaking them, not according to the laws of virtue, or the dictates of prudence. To give them this propriety, they must often be apologies for vice and for fraud, or contain ridicule against virtue and honesty. It is not sufficient to answer, that if the person uttering them is punished in the course, or at the end of the play, the expiation is

sufficiently made; if the sentiments at the time are shrewdly imagined, and forcibly expressed, they will have a powerful effect on the mind, and leave impressions which the retribution of poetical justice will hardly be able to efface.

On poetical justice, indeed, I do not lay so much stress as some authors have done. I incline to be of the opinion of one of my predecessors, that we are frequently more roused to a love of virtue, and a hatred of vice, when virtue is unfortunate, and vice successful, than when each receives the recompence it merits. But I impute more to striking incidents, to the sentiments running through the tenor of a piece, than to the general impression of its *denouement*. Mons. d'Alembert says, that in any sort of spectacle which would leave the poet more at liberty than tragedies taken from history, in the Opera, for example, the author would not easily be pardoned, for allowing vice to go unpunished. 'I remember to have seen,' continued he, 'a MS. opera of Atreus, where that monster perished by a thunderbolt, exclaiming, with a savage satisfaction,

> '*Tonnez, Dieux impuissans;*
> '*Frappez; je suis vengé!*'

'This would have made one of the happiest *denouements* that can well be imagined.' As to theatrical effect, I am quite of his opinion: but as to the moral, I cannot agree with him. The line which he quotes, brilliant, forcible, and bold, would have remained with the audience, not to recal the punishment of guilt, but to mark the pleasure of revenge.

But it is not only from the vices or imperfections of tragic characters that we are to fear the danger of familiarising the approach of evil, or encouraging the growth of error. Their very virtues, I fear, are often dangerous to form the principles, or draw the imitation of their readers. Theirs are not so much

the useful, the productive virtues (if I may be allowed the expression) of real life, as the shining and showy qualities which attract the applause, or flatter the vanity of the unthinking. The extreme, the enthusiasm even of a laudable propensity, takes from its usefulness to others, and degenerates into a blind and headlong indulgence in the possessor. In the greatest part of modern Tragedies, such are the qualities of the persons that are most in favour with the public. In what relates to passive excellence, prudence to avoid evils, or fortitude to bear them, are not the virtues of Tragedy, conversant as it is with misfortune; it is proud to indulge in sorrow, to pour its tears without the control of reason, to die of disappointments which wisdom would have overcome. There is an æra in the life of most young people, and those too the most amiable, where all this is their creed of excellence, generosity, and heroism, and that creed is drawn from Romance and Tragedy.

In the remarks which in this and two former papers I have made on Novel and on Tragedy, two of the most popular of all kinds of writing, I have ventured, in the hardihood of a Moralist, rather beyond the usual caution of a periodical paper that wishes to conciliate the favour of the Public. By those whose daily and favourite reading is crossed by my observations, I shall be asked, if I mean to proscribe every Novel and every Tragedy, or of what kind of each I am disposed to allow the perusal, and to what class of readers their perusal may be trusted. To such I would answer in general, that if I had influence enough to abridge the list of both species of reading, I believe neither morals nor taste would suffer by the restriction. I have pointed out the chief dangers to which I conceive the perusal of many such works is liable.

I am not, however, insensible of the value, perhaps but too sensible of the power, of these productions of fancy and genius. Nor am I so much a bigot to the opinions I have delivered as to deny that there are uses, noble uses, which such productions may serve, amidst the dangers to which they sometimes expose their readers. The region of exalted virtue, of dignified sentiment, into which they transport us, may have a considerable effect in changing the cold and unfeeling temparament of worldly minds; the indifferent and the selfish may be warmed and expanded by the fiction of distress, and the eloquence of feeling. In the present age, and among certain ranks, indifference and selfishness have become a sort of virtues, and fashion has sometimes taught the young to pride themselves on qualities so unnatural to them. To combat these 'Giants of the rock,' Romance and Tragedy may be very usefully employed; and that race must have become worthless and degenerate indeed, whom their terrors shall fail to rouse, and their griefs to melt.

Nor, as an amusement, can the elegance of that which is drawn from the perusal of a well-written novel, or the representation of a well-composed tragedy, be disputed. It certainly is as much a nobler, as it is a more harmless employment of time, than its waste in frivolous dissipation, or its abuse in the vigils of play. But there is a certain sort of mind common in youth, and that too of the most amiable, kind, tender, warm, and visionary, to which the walks of fancy and enthusiasm, of romantic love, of exaggerated sorrow, of trembling sensibility are very unsafe. To readers of this complexion, the amusement which the works abovementioned afford, should, I think, be sparingly allowed, and judiciously chosen. In such bosoms, feeling or susceptibility must be often repressed or directed; to encourage it by prema-

ture or unnatural means, is certainly hurtful. They resemble some luxuriant soils which may be enriched beyond a wholesome fertility, till weeds are their only produce; weeds, the more to be regretted, as in the soil from which virtue should have sprung.'

V

N° 29. SATURDAY, AUGUST, 20, 1785.

THE advantages and use of Biography have of late been so often mentioned, and are now so universally allowed, that it is needless for any modern author to set them forth. That department of writing, however, has been of late years so much cultivated, that it has fared with biography as with every other art; it has lost much of its dignity in its commonness, and many lives have been presented to the public, from which little instruction or amusement could be drawn. Individuals have been traced in minute and ordinary actions, from which no consequences could arise, but to the private circle of their own families and friends, and in the detail of which we saw no passion excited, no character developed, nothing that should distinguish them from those common occurrences,

'Which dully took their course, and were forgotten.'

Yet there are few even of those comparatively insignificant lives, in which men of a serious and thinking cast do not feel a certain degree of interest. A pensive mind can trace, in seemingly trivial incidents and common situations, something to feed reflection

and to foster thought; as the solitary naturalist culls the trodden weeds, and discovers in their form and texture, the principles of vegetative nature. The motive, too, of the relater, often helps out the unimportance of his relation; and to the ingenuous and susceptible, there is a feeling not unpleasant in allowing for the partiality of gratitude, and the tediousness of him who recounts his obligations. The virtuous connections of life and of the heart it is always pleasing to trace, even though the objects are neither new nor striking. Like those familiar paintings that show the inside of cottages, and the exercise of village duties, such narrations come home to the bosoms of the worthy, who feel the relationship of Virtue, and acknowledge her family wherever it is found. And perhaps there is a calmer and more placid delight in viewing her amidst these unimportant offices, than when we look up to her invested in the pomp of greatness, and the pride of power.

I have been led to these reflections by an account, with which a correspondent has furnished me, of some particulars in the life of an individual, a native of this country, who died a few weeks ago in London, Mr. William Strahan, Printer to his Majesty. His title to be recorded in a work of this sort my correspondent argue from a variety of considerations unnecessary to be repeated. One which applies particularly to the public office of the Lounger, I will take the liberty to mention. He was the author of a paper in the Mirror; a work in the train of which I am proud to walk, and am glad of an opportunity to plead my relation to it, by inserting the *eloge* (I take that word as custom has sanctified it, without adopting its abstract signification) of one of its writers.

Mr. Strahan was born at Edinburgh in the year 1715. His father, who had a small appointment in

the customs, gave his son the education which every lad of decent rank then received in a country where the avenues to learning were easy and open to men of the most moderate circumstances. After having passed through the tuition of a grammar-school, he was put apprentice to a printer; and when a very young man, removed to a wider sphere in that line of business, and went to follow his trade in London. Sober, diligent, and attentive, while his emoluments were for some time very scanty, he contrived to live rather within than beyond his income; and though he married early, and without such a provision as prudence might have looked for in the establishment of a family, he continued to thrive, and to better his circumstances. This he would often mention as an encouragement to early matrimony, and used to say, that he never had a child born that Providence did not send some increase of income to provide for the increase of his household. With sufficient vigour of mind, he had that happy flow of animal spirits, that is not easily discouraged by unpromising appearances. By him who can look with firmness upon difficulties, their conquest is already half atchieved; but the man on whose heart and spirits they lie heavy, will scarcely be able to bear up against their pressure. The forecast of timid, or the disgust of too delicate minds, are very unfortunate attendants for men of business, who, to be successful, must often push improbabilities, and bear with mortifications.

His abilities in his profession, accompanied with perfect integrity and unabating diligence, enabled him after the first difficulties were overcome, to get on with rapid success. And he was one of the most flourishing men in the trade, when, in the year 1770, he purchased a share of the patent for King's Printer of Mr. Eyre, with whom he maintained the most

cordial intamacy during all the rest of his life. Besides the emoluments arising from this appointmect, as well as from a very extensive private business, he now drew largely from a field which required some degree of speculative sagacity to cultivate; I mean that great literary property which he acquired by purchasing the copy-rights of some of the most celebrated authors of the time. In this his liberality kept equal pace with his prudence, and in some cases went perhaps rather beyond it. Never had such rewards been given to the labours of literary men, as now were received from him and his associates in those purchases of copy-rights from authors.

Having now attained the first great object of business, wealth, Mr. Strahan looked with a very allowable ambition on the stations of political rank and eminence. Politics had long occupied his active mind, which he had for many years pursued as his favourite amusement, by corresponding on that subject with some of the first characters of the age. Mr. Strahan's queries to Dr. Franklin in the year 1769, respecting the discontents of the Americans, published in the London Chronicle of 28th July 1778, shew the just conception he entertained of the important consequences of that dispute, and his anxiety as a good subject to investigate, at that early period, the proper means by which their grievances might be removed, and a permanent harmony restored between the two countries. In the year 1775, he was elected a member of parliament for the borough of Malmsbury, in Wiltshire, with a very illustrious colleague, the Hon. C. J. Fox; and in the succeeding parliament for Wotton-Basset, in the same county. In this station, applying himself with that industry which was natural to him, he attended the House with a scrupulous punctuality, and was a useful member.

His talents for business acquired the consideration to which they were entitled, and were not unnoticed by the Minister.

In his political connection he was constant to the friends to whom he had first been attached. He was a steady supporter of that party who were turned out of administration in spring 1784, and lost his seat in the House of Commons by the dissolution of parliament, with which that charge was followed; a situation which he did not show any desire to resume on the return of the new parliament.

One motive for his not wishing a seat in the present parliament, was a feeling of some decline in his health, which had rather suffered from the long sitting and late hours with which the political warfare in the last had been attended. Though without any fixed disease, his strength was visibly declining; and though his spirits survived his strength, yet the vigour and activity of his mind were also considerably impaired. Both continued gradually to decline, till his death, which happened on Saturday the 9th July 1785, in the 71st year of his age.

Of riches acquired by industry, the disposal is often ruled by caprice, as if the owners wished to shew their uncontrolled power over that wealth which their own exertions had attained, by a whimsical allotment of it after their death. In this, as in other particulars, Mr. Strahan's discretion and good sense were apparent: he bequeathed his fortune in the most rational manner; and of that portion which was not left to his wife and children, the distribution was equally prudent and benevolent. Like his predecessor in trade, the celebrated Mr. Boyer, he left 1000l. to the Stationers' Company, of which he was a member, to be stocked, for the benefit of decayed booksellers and printers.

Endued with much natural sagacity, and an attentive observation of life, Mr. Strahan owed his rise to that station of opulence and respect which he attained, rather to his own talents and exertion, than to any accidental occurrence of favourable or fortunate circumstances. His mind, though not deeply tinctured with learning, was not uninformed by letters. From a habit of attention to style, he had acquired a considerable portion of critical acuteness in the discernment of its beauties and defects. In one branch of writing himself excelled, I mean the epistolary, in which he not only shewed the precision and clearness of business, but possessed a neatness as well as fluency of expression which I have known few letter-writers to surpas. Letter-writing was one of his favourite amusements; and among his correspondents were men of such eminence and talents as well repaid his endeavours to entertain them. One of these, as we have before mentioned, was the justly celebrated Dr. Franklin, originally a Printer like Mr. Strahan, and his fellow-workman in early life in a printing-house in London, whose friendship and correspondence he continued to enjoy, notwithstanding the difference of their sentiments in political matters, which often afforded pleasantry, but never mixed any thing acrimonious in their letters. One of the latest he received from his illustrious and venerable friend, contained a humorous Allegory of the state of politics in Britain, drawn from the profession of Printing, of which, though the Doctor had quitted the exercise, he had not forgotten the terms.

There are stations of acquired greatness which make men proud to recal the lowness of that from which they rose. The native eminence of Franklin's mind was above concealing the humbleness of his origin. Those only who possess no intrinsic eleva-

tion are afraid to sully the honours to which accident has raised them, by the recollection of that obscurity whence they sprung.

Of this recollection Mr. Straban was rather proud than ashamed; and I have heard those who were disposed to censure him, blame it as a kind of ostentation in which he was weak enough to indulge. But methinks, ' 'tis to consider too curiously, to consider it so.' There is a kind of reputation which we may laudably desire, and justly enjoy; and he who is sincere enough to forego the pride of ancestry and of birth, may, without much imputation of vanity, assume the merit of his own elevation.

In that elevation, he neither triumphed over the inferiority of those he had left behind him, nor forgot the equality in which they had formerly stood. Of their inferiority he did not even remind them, by the ostentation of grandeur, or the parade of wealth. In his house there was none of that saucy train, none of that state or finery, with which the illiberal delight to confound and to dazzle those who may have formerly seen them in less enviable circumstances. No man was more mindful of, ar more solicitous to oblige, the acquaintance or companions of his early days. The advice which his experience, or the assistance which his purse could afford, he was ready to communicate; and at his table in London every gentleman found an easy introduction, and every old acquaintance a cordial welcome. This was not merely a virtue of hospitality, or a duty of benevolence with him; he felt it warmly as a sentiment; and that paper in the Mirror of which I mentioned him as the author (the Letter from London in the 94th number), was, I am persuaded, a genuine picture of his feelings on the recollection of those scenes in which his youth had been spent, and of those companions with which it had been associated.

Such of them as still survive him will read the above short account of his life with interest and with pleasure. For others it may not be altogether devoid of entertainment or of use. If, among the middling and busy ranks of mankind, it can afford an encouragement to the industry of those who are beginning to climb into life, or furnish a lesson of moderation those who have attained its height; if to the first it may recommend honest industry and sober diligence; if to the latter it may suggest the ties of ancient fellowship and early connection, which the pride of wealth or of station loses as much dignity as it foregoes satisfaction by refusing to acknowledge; if it shall cheer one hour of despondency or discontent to the young; if it shall save one frown of disdain or of refusal to the unfortunate; the higher and more refined class of my readers will forgive the familiarity of the example, and consider, that it is not from the biography of heroes or of statesmen that instances can be drawn to prompt the conduct of the bulk of mankind, or to excite the useful though less splendid virtues of private and domestic life.

Z

N° 30. SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 1785.

To the LOUNGER.

SIR,

ALTHOUGH a stranger to your person, I have the honour of being pretty near allied to you. When you know who I am, I flatter myself you will not think yourself disgraced by the alliance, and that you

will permit me to claim kindred with you. Of this you may be assured, I would not do it, did I not entertain a favourable opinion of you; and having nothing to ask, you may consider my desire to be ranked among your friends as a mark of approbation. Know then, Sir, that the person who has now the honour to address you is a member of the Mirror Club.

Although long since dead as an author, you will readily believe that I am interested in the success of the Lounger. Persons placed in the same situations naturally feel a sympathetic sort of attachment for each other. When the Lounger was first advertised, I could not help recollecting the sensations I experienced when the publication of the Mirror was first announced in the papers; and when your introductory number appeared, I sent for it with an impatience, and a solicitude, which I should not have felt in the same degree had I not once been in a situation similar to yours.

You, Sir, started with many advantages which we did not possess. The public are now taught to know, that it is possible to carry on a periodical work of this kind in Edinburgh; and that, if tolerably executed, it will be read, and will hold its place with other works of the same kind. But when we boldly gave the Mirror to the world, a very different notion prevailed. It was supposed that no such work could be conducted with any propriety on this side of the Tweed. Accordingly, the Mirror was received with the most perfect indifference in our own country; and during the publication, it was indebted for any little reputation it received in Scotland, to the notice that happened to be taken of it by some persons of rank and of taste in England. Nay, sir, strange as you may think, it is certainly true, that, narrow as Edinburgh, is, there were men who consider themselves

as men of letters, who never read a Number of it while it was going on.

But although in this and in many other respects the Lounger may possess advantages over the Mirror, there is one particular in which I am apt to believe, that we the members of the Mirror Club possessed an advantage over the author of the Lounger. You, Sir, if I mistake not, conduct your work single and alone, unconnected with any person whatever. We, Sir, were a Society, consisting of a few friends, closely united by long habits of intimacy. Not only, therefore, is your task much more arduous than ours, but, in the way of amusement, we certainly had the advantage of you. I can never forget the pleasure we enjoyed in meeting to read our papers in the Club. There they were criticised with perfect freedom, but with the greatest good humour. When any of us produced a paper, which, either from the style or manner of it, or from the nature of the subject seemed inadmissible, it was condemned without hesitation, and the author, putting it in his pocket, drank a bumper to its manes. We had stated meetings to receive the communications with which we were honoured, which afforded another source of amusement. This pleasure, however, was not without alloy. We were often, from particular circumstances, obliged to reject compositions of real merit; and what perhaps was equally distressing, we were sometimes obliged to abridge or to alter the papers which we published. Might I presume to give you an advice, it would be, to use this liberty as rarely as possible. We authors know, that there is a certain complacency, not to call it vanity, which a man feels for his own compositions, which makes him unwilling to submit them to the correction of he does not know whom, or to acquiesce in an alteration made he does not know why. In justice, however, to our corres-

pondents, I must add, that they continued to honour us with their favours, notwithstanding the liberties we took with their compositions, and although it was not in our power to explain the reasons which induced us to take those liberties.

But, Sir, one never ceasing fund of amusement to us, was communicating the observations we had occasion to hear, in different societies and different companies, upon the Mirror, and its supposed authors. The supercilious, who despised the paper because they did not know by whom it was written, talked of it as a catchpenny performance, carried on by a set of needy and obscure scribblers. Those who entertained a more favourable opinion of it, were apt to fall into an opposite mistake, and to suppose that the Mirror was the production of all the men of letters in Scotland. This last opinion is not yet entirely exploded, and perhaps has rather gained ground from the favourable reception of the Mirror since its publication in volumes. The last time I was in London I happened to step into Mr. Cadell's shop, and while I was amusing myself in turning over the prints in Cook's last Voyage, Lord B—— came in, and taking up a volume of the Mirror, asked Mr. Cadell, who were the authors of it. Cadell, who did not suspect that I knew any more of the matter than the Great Mogul, answered, 'That he could not really mention particular names; but he believed that all the *literati* of Scotland were concerned in it.' Lord B—— walked off, satisfied that this was truly the case; and about a week after I heard him say at Lord M——'s levee, that he was well assured the Mirror was the joint production of all the men of letters in Scotland.

I will now, Sir, tell you in confidence, that (one of our number excepted, whose writings have long been read with admiration and delight, and whose exqui-

site pencil every reader of taste and discernment must distinguish in the Mirror) there was not one of our Club who ever published a single sentence, or in all likelihood ever would have done it, had it not been for the accidental publication of the Mirror.

But the most amusing part of the whole was the application of the characters in the Mirror to real life; and I verily believe many a charitable lady and well-disposed gentleman read it with no other view than to find out characters which they might apply to their friends and acquaintances. I dined in a large company the day on which the first letter signed John Homespun was published. At table Lady —— asked if any body had seen the Mirror of that day. 'Yes,' answered Mrs.—— 'it is a charming paper, but there is a great Lady in the West, that won't be very fond of it. She is drawn to the life; I knew her before I had read half the paper.' 'In the West?' replied Lady —— 'in the South, you mean. I agree with you, that the picture is well drawn; and if you knew the Countess of —— as well as I have the honour to know her, you could not doubt that she is truly the original.' 'Pardon me, Ladies,' said a little sharp-looking man, in a northern accent,' I believe you are both mistaken. I have read the paper, and I think the great Lady so well pointed out in it, is neither from the West nor from the South, but from my country; at least I am sure we have two or three very like the woman in the Mirror, who do no good to us small folks when we get among them, and are apt to turn the heads of our wives and our daughters;— ah, and of our sons too,' added he, with a significant nod. The ladies, however, would not yield their opinion; and a dispute ensued, which was to me not a little amusing, as I knew that the author had no particular Lady in view, either from the West or from the East, from the South or from the North.

One morning I called upon a Lady, and found her reading N° 47 of the Mirror, a paper of mine. 'Well,' said she, 'I know every person described here as well as if they had given us their names at full length.' She then named some of her acquaintance, whose persons and characters were equally unknown to me, and even whose names I never heard mentioned before.

But the most dangerous application of this sort was that of the character of Sir Bobby Button. Of our forty-five members it may, without offence, be said that some of them are *manu quam lingua promptiores*, readier at a blow than a word; and we were told, that they seriously intended to make the author of the Mirror speak out, and say, whether, in the modern language of Parliament, he meant any thing personal. This intelligence produced some little uneasiness in our Society; but we resolved to act with becoming dignity and spirit, had the respectable body of our representatives called upon us for an explanation.

Thus, in the hands of many, the Mirror, innocent and well intended as it was, became a vehicle of slander; and the envious, the splenetic, and the malicious, found an entertainment in it which never was intended for them. Be not you, Sir, discouraged by this. Go on boldly to correct our follies and our vices, by painting them truly as they are. To attain this purpose, I would advise you in the words of the bloody Renault,—'to spare neither age, nor sex, nor condition.' But while I say this, I must add, that it is only the vices and the follies themselves which you are entitled to attack, and not the individuals who may be guilty of them. You, Sir, will not prostitute your Paper, to make it the vehicle of slander or of censure against private characters: you will describe the general manners of the age, not those of

this or that private person. Hitherto you have not offended in this way; and if you continue in the same proper course, I shall drink success to the Lounger at our next anniversary meeting; for you must know, that our Club still meets once a-year on the day our first number was published. There it would do your heart good to hear us talk over the little anecdotes which gave us so much pleasure in the Mirror. I shall propose, Sir, that you be received as a guest at our anniversary next year, that you may see what sort of folks your predecessors were. There is one point in which I trust you will agree with us, and that is, in preferring good claret to port wine. Hoping to have the honour of drinking a glass of our favourite liquor with you, I am, &c.

A Member of the Mirror Club.

I feel myself much honoured by this mark of attention from one of my predecessors, and much flattered by his approbation. At the same time I hesitated whether I ought or ought not to publish his letter. Indeed I am not at this moment perfectly clear in my own mind, whether he meant or wished that it should be published. It is written so much in the style of private confidence and friendship, that it seems not to have been intended for the public.—Besides, I was aware that the scoffers might be apt to smile at that air of importance with which 'we authors,' even of periodical sheets, are apt to regard every thing which concerns ourselves and our works, and of which, it must be owned, there are some plain enough marks in this letter. Notwithstanding all this, I at length resolved to publish it, partly to gratify my own vanity, and partly because I could in no

other shape return my acknowledgments to my correspondent for the notice with which he has been so kind as to honour me. I have only to add, that I have long felt a strong desire to be personally acquainted with the members of the Mirror Club, and therefore I am much pleased with the hint given in the close of the letter, of an invitation to attend their anniversary meeting.

R

N° 31. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER, 3, 1785.

Rura mihi et rigui placeant in vallibus amnes. VIRG.

One of the most natural, as well as one of the purest pleasures, arising from the effect of external objects on the mind, is the enjoyment of rural prospects and rural scenery. The ideas of health, contentment, peace and innocence, are so interwoven with those of the country, that their connection has become proverbial; and the pleasures arising from it are not only celebrated by those who have experienced their sweets, but they are frequently supposed by thousands to whom they never were known, and described by many by whom they have long been forgotten.

Of them as of every other enjoyment the value is enhanced by vicissitude; and long exclusion is one great ingredient in the delight of their attainment. Few have been so unfortunate as to have an opportunity of forming a full idea of that pleasure which a great state-criminal is said to have felt, when, on being taken from his dungeon, he saw the light, and breathed the open air, but for that short space which conducted him to his scaffold. But it may in some

measure be conceived from the satisfaction which most men have at times experienced in changing the smoky atmosphere and close corrupted vapour of a crowded town, for the pure elastic breeze of a furze-hill, or the balmy perfume of a bean-field.

With such increased enjoyment do I now feel the pleasures of the country, after being, as Milton says, 'long in populous city pent.' A very pressing invitation from my friend Colonel Caustic prevailed over that indolence, which was always a part of my constitution, and which I feel advanced life nowise tend to diminish. Having one day missed half a dozen acquaintance, one after another, who I was informed had gone into the country, I came home in the evening, found a second letter from the Colonel, urging my visit, read part of Virgil's second Georgic, looked from my highest window on the sun just about to set amidst the golden clouds of a beautiful western sky, and coming down stairs, ordered my man to pack up my portmanteau, and next morning set out for my friend's country-seat, whence I now address my readers.

To me, who am accustomed to be idle without being vacant, whose thoughts are rather wandering than busy, and whose fancy rather various than vivid, the soft and modest painting of Nature in this beautiful retirement of my friend's is particularly suited. Here where I am seated at this moment, in a little shady arbour with a sloping lawn in front, covered with some sheep that are resting in the noon-day heat, with their lambkins around them; with a grove of pines on the right hand, through which a scarcely stirring breeze is heard faintly to whisper: with a brook on the left, to the gurgle of which the willows on its side seem to listen in silence; this landscape, with a back ground of distant hills, on which one can discover the smoke of the shepherd's

fire, rising in large lazy volumes to a thinly-fleckered sky; all this forms a scene peaceful though enlivened, oblivious of care yet rich in thought, which soothes my indolence with a congenial quiet, yet dignifies it with the swellings of enthusiasm and the dreams of imagination.

On this subject of the enjoyment of rural contemplation, I was much pleased with some reflections lately sent me by a correspondent, who subscribes himself Eubulus. 'It is the great error of mankind,' says he, 'that in the pursuit of happiness, they commonly seek for it in violent gratifications, in pleasures which are too intense in their degree to be of long duration, and of which even the frequent repetition blunts the capacity of enjoyment. There is no lesson more useful to mankind than that which teaches them, that the most rational happiness is averse to all turbulent emotions; that it is serene and moderate in its nature; that its ingredients are neither costly in the acquisition nor difficult in the attainment, but present themselves almost voluntarily to a well-ordered mind, and are open to every rank and condition of life, where absolute indigence is excluded.

'The intellectual pleasures have this peculiar and superlative advantage over those that are merely sensual, that the most delightful of the former require no appropriation of their objects in order to their enjoyment. The contemplative man, who is an admirer of the beauties of nature, has an ideal property in all its objects. He enjoys the hill, the vale, the stream, the wood, the garden, with a pleasure more exquisite, because more unallayed, than that of their actual possessor. To him each enjoyment is heightened by the sense of that unremitting bounty which furnishes it; nor is he disquieted by the anxiety of

maintaining a possession of which he cannot be deprived. How truly may he exclaim with the poet,

> 'I care not, Fortune, what you me deny;
> 'You cannot rob me of free Nature's grace;
> 'You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
> 'Through which Aurora shews her brightening face;
> 'You cannot bar my constant feet to trace
> 'The woods and lawns, by living stream, at eve;
> 'Let health my nerves and finer fibres brace;
> 'Of Fancy, Reason, Virtue, nought can me bereave.*

'To a mind of that happy conformation which the Poet here describes, the sources of pleasure are infinite. Nature is not less delightful in her general impressions, than when surveyed in detail; and to the former of these the verses above quoted seem chiefly to refer. It is certain that we experience a high degree of pleasure in certain emotions, excited by the general contemplation of Nature, when the attention does not dwell minutely upon any of the objects that surround us. Sympathy, the most powerful principle in the human composition, has a strong effect in constituting the pleasure here alluded to. The stillness of the country, and the tranquillity of its scenes, have a sensible effect in calming the disorder of the passions, and inducing a temporary serenity of mind. By the same sympathy, the milder passions are excited, while the turbulent are laid asleep. That man must be of a hardened frame indeed, who can hear unmoved the song of the feathered tribes, when Spring calls forth 'all Nature's harmony,' or who can behold, without a corresponding emotion of joy and of gratitude, the sprightliness of the young race of animals wantoning

* Thomson's Castle of Indolence.

in the exercise of their new powers, and invigorated by the benignity of the air and the luxuriancy of their pastures.'

My friend Colonel Caustic, though I will venture to say for him, that he is neither without the sensibility of mind, nor the emotions of pious gratitude, which my correspondent justly supposes the contemplation of the rural scene to excite, yet surveys it not with feelings of quite so placid a sort as in some other minds it will be apt to produce. Here, as every where else, he stamps on the surrounding objects somewhat of the particular impression of his character. That sentiment, which, like the genius of Socrates, perpetually attends him, the child of virtue and of philanthropy, nursed by spleen, though here it puts on a certain tenderness which it has not in town, and is rather disposed to complain than to censure, yet walks with him, not unemployed, through his woods and his fields, and throws on the finest of their beauties a tint of its own colouring, as the glass of the little instrument called a Claude Loraine, dims the landscape which is viewed through it.

I have not been able to convince him that the weather is not very much changed from what it was in his younger days, and he quotes many observations in support of the milder temperature of the air in those long past seasons. But his sister (a very respectable maiden lady, a few years younger than the Colonel, who keeps house for him) insists on the difference in stronger terms, and is surprised at my unbelief, even though it is confirmed by the register. Of her faith in this article she shews the sincerity, by her practice in household-matters, having, as she tells me, for these fifteen or sixteen years past, taken out the greens from the fire-places at least a fortnight earlier than formerly, and not uncarpeting the rooms,

nor taking down the window-curtains, till near a month later than she was wont to do.

On the appearance of his own fields the Colonel does not say quite so much, the culture he has bestowed on them counteracting in that particular the natural deterioration; but wherever Nature has been left to herself, her productions, according to him, have grown more scanty. When we start a hare, or flush a partridge in our walks, the Colonel always tells me there is not one for ten in his grounds that he used to see formerly; and he rather seemed to enjoy than condole with my want of sport, when I went yesterday a-fishing on the very same part of the river from which he informed me he was of old sure of catching a dish of trouts in an hour's time any day of the season. Nor was he quite well pleased with his man John's attempting to account for it, by his neighbour Lord Grubwell's having lately sent down a casting net for the use of his game-keeper.

On the subject of Lord Grubwell, however, in other matters, he is generally apt enough himself to expatiate. 'This man,' said he, 'whose father acquired the fortune, which afterwards procured the son his title, has started into the rank without the manners or the taste of a gentleman. The want of the first would only be felt those two or three times in the year when one is obliged to meet with him; but the perversion of the latter, with a full purse to give it way, makes his neighbourhood a very unfortunate one. That rising ground on the left, which was formerly one of the finest green swells in the world, he has put yon vile Gothic tower on, as he calls it, and has planted half a dozen little carronades on the top of it, which it is a favourite amusement with him to fire on holidays and birth-days, or when some respected visitor drinks tea there.' 'That will

frighten your Dryads,' said I smiling. 'It often frightens my sister, replied the Colonel; 'and I am weak enough to let it fret me. I can bear the man's nonsense, when it is not heard two miles off. That ugly dry gap in the bank opposite to us was the channel of a rill, of which he turned the course, to make a serpentine river for his Chinese bridge, which he had built without knowing where to find water for it. And from the little hills behind he has rooted out all the natural fringe of their birch and oak shrub-wood, to cover their tops with stiff circular plantations. Then his temples and statues, with their white plaster and paint, meet one's eye in every corner. I have been fain to run up that hedge, to screen me from all those impertinencies, though it lost my favourite seat the best half of its prospect.'

But Colonel Caustic has other wrongs from the innovations of his neighbour, which he suffers without telling them. Lord Grubwell's improvements often trench on a feeling more tender than the Colonel's taste, though that is delicate enough. The scenes around him have those ties upon my friend which long acquaintance naturally gives them over a mind so susceptible as his. As the Mythology of the ancients animated all nature, by giving a tutelary power to every wood and fountain, so he has peopled many of the objects in his view with the images of past events, of departed friends, of warm affections, of tender regrets; and he feels the change, or sometimes even the improvement, as a sacrilege that drives the deity from the place. This sentiment of memory is felt but very imperfectly in a town; in the country it retains all its force; and with Colonel Caustic it operates in the strongest manner possible. Here he withdraws himself from an age which he thinks is in its decline, and finds in the world of remembrance that warmth of friendship, that purity of

manners, that refinement of breeding, that elegance of form, that dignity of deportment, which charmed his youth. This is perhaps one cause of his severity, when at any time he mixes with mankind: 'tis like leaving an enlightened company of friends, for the frivolous society of ordinary men, which often overcomes the temper of the best-natured people, and, if it does not sink them into sadness and silence, will generally make them 'humorous and peevish.'

Even the recollection of sufferings endears to such a mind as Caustic's the scene that recalls them. I observed, that wherever our stroll began, it commonly ended in a *sombre* walk, that led through a grove of beeches to a little sequestered dell. Here I remarked one tree fenced round in such a manner as shewed a particular attention to its growth. I stopped as we passed, and looked on it with a face of inquiry. 'That tree,' said the Colonel, observing me, 'is about forty years old.'—He went on a few paces—'It was planted by a Lady,'—throwing his eye on the ground, and blushing, as I thought.—'It was planted'—'He walked some steps farther; looked back, and sighed.—'She was then one of the finest women in the world!'

Z

N° 32. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1785.

I AM every day more and more disposed to congratulate myself on this visit to Colonel Caustic. Here I find him with all his good qualities brought forward, with all his failings thrown into the back

ground which only serve (to carry the simile a little farther) to give force and relief to the picture. I am now assured of what before I was willing to believe, that Caustic's spleen is of that sort which is the produce of the warmest philanthropy. As the admirer of painting is most offended with the scrawls of a dauber, as the enthusiast in music is most hurt with the discords of an ill-played instrument; so the lover of mankind, as his own sense of virtue has painted them, when he comes abroad into life, and sees what they really are, feels the disappointment in the severest manner; and he will often indulge in satire beyond the limits of discretion; while indifference or selfishness will be contented to take men as it finds them, and never allow itself to be disquieted with the soreness of disappointed benevolence or the warmth of indignant virtue.

I have likewise made an acquisition of no inconsiderable value in the acquaintance of Colonel Caustic's sister. His affection for her is of that genuine sort which was to be expected from the view of his character I have given. The first night of my being here, when Miss Caustic was to retire after supper, her brother rose, drew back the large arm-chair in which she sat at table with one hand, pulled the bell-string with the other, opened the parlour-door while she was making her curtsey to me, and then saluted her as she went out, and bid her good night; and all this with a sort of tender ceremony which I felt then, and feel still (for it is a thing of custom with them,) as one of the pleasantest pieces of good-breeding I had ever witnessed. 'My sister is an excellent woman,' said the Colonel, as he shut the door; 'and I don't like her the worse for having something of the primeval about her. You don't know how much I owe her. When I was a careless young fellow, living what we called a fashionable

life about town, thinking perhaps, like a puppy as I was, what sort of a coat I should wear, or what sort of a stocking would best show off my leg, or perhaps practising my salute before a glass, to enchant the ladies at a review, my sister Peggy, though several years younger, was here at home, nursing the declining age of one of the best of mothers, and managing every shilling not only of mine, but of theirs, to make up a sum for purchasing me a company. Since my mother's death, and my being settled here, her attentions have been all transferred to me; my companion in health, my nurse in sickness, with all those little domestic services which, though they are cyphers in the general account, a man like me, whose home is so much to him, feels of infinite importance; and there is a manner of doing them, a quiet, unauthoritative, unbustling way of keeping things right, which is often more important than the things themselves. Then I am indebted to her for the tolerable terms I stand in with the world. When it grates harshly on me (and I am old, and apt perhaps to be a little cross at times), she contrives somehow to smooth matters between us; and the apology I would not allow from itself, I can hear from her, knowing as I do, her worth, and the affection she bears me.——I were a brute to love her less than I do.

'There is something,' continued the Colonel, after a little pause, 'in the circumstance of sex, that mixes a degree of tenderness with our duty to a female, something that claims our protection and our service in a style so different from what the other demands from us;—the very same offices are performed so differently; 'tis like grasping a crab-tree, and touching a violet. Whenever I see a man treat a woman not as a woman should be treated, be it a chambermaid or a kitchen-wench (not to say a wife or a sister, though I have seen such examples), let

him be of what fashion or rank he may, or as polite at other times as he will, I am sure his politeness is not of the right breed. He may have been taught by a dancing-master, at court, or by travel; but still his courtesy is not his own; 'tis borrowed only, and not to be relied on.'

Miss Caustic, with all those domestic and household accomplishments which her brother commends, often shows that she has been skilled in more refined ones, though she has now laid them aside, like the dresses of her youth, as unsuitable to her age and situation. She can still talk of Music, of Poetry, of Plays, and of Novels; and in conversation with younger people, listens to their discourse on those topics with an interest and a feeling that is particularly pleasing to them. Her own studies, however, are of a more serious cast. Besides those books of devotion which employ her private hours, she reads history for amusement, gardening and medicine by way of business: for she is the physician of the parish, and is thought by the country folks to be wonderfully skilful. Her brother often jokes her on the number and the wants of her patients. 'I don't know, Sister,' said he t'other morning, 'what fees you get; but your patients cost me a great deal of money. I have unfortunately but one Recipe, and it is a specific for almost all their diseases.'—'I only ask now and then,' said she, 'the key of your cellar for them, Brother; the key of your purse they will find for themselves. Yet why should not we be apothecaries that way? Poverty is a disease too; and if a little of my cordials, or your money, can cheer the hearts of some who have no other malady' —'It is well bestowed, Sister Peggy; and so we'll continue to practise, though we should now and then be cheated.'

'Tis one of the advantages of the country, said I, 'that you get within reach of a certain rank of men, often most virtuous and useful, whom in a town we have no opportunity of knowing at all.'—'Why, yes,' said Caustic; but the misfortune is, that those who could do the most for them, seldom see them as they ought. I have heard that every body carries a certain atmosphere of its own along with it, which a change of air does not immediately remove. So there is a certain town atmosphere which a great man brings with him into the country. He has two or three laced laquies, and two or three attendants without wages, through whom he sees, and hears, and does every thing; and Poverty, Industry, and Nature, get no nearer than the great gate of his court-yard.'—'Tis but too true,' said his sister. 'I have several pensioners who come with heavy hearts from Lord Grubwell's door, though they were once, they say, tenants or workmen of his own, or, as some of them pretend, relations of his grandfather.' —'That's the very reason,' continued the Colonel; 'why will they put the man in mind of his father and grandfather! The fellows deserve a horse-pond for their impertinence.'—'Nay, but in truth,' replied Miss Caustic, 'my Lord knows nothing of the matter. He carries so much of the town's-atmosphere, as you call it, about him. He does not rise till eleven, nor breakfast till twelve. Then he has his steward with him for one hour, his architect for another, his layer out of ground for a third. After this he sometimes gallops out for a little exercise, or plays at billiards within doors: dines at a table of twenty covers; sits very late at his bottle; plays cards, except when my lady chuses dancing, till midnight; and they seldom part till sun-rise:—'And so ends,' said the Colonel, 'your *Idyllium* on my Lord Grubwell's rural occupations.'

We heard the tread of a horse in the court, and presently John entered with a card in his hand; which his master no sooner threw his eyes on, than he said, 'But you need not describe, Sister; our friend may see, if he inclines it. That card (I could tell the chaplain's fold at a mile's distance) is my Lord's annual invitation to dinner. Is it not, John?' —'It is my Lord Grubwell's servant, Sir,' said John. His master read the card: 'And as he understands the Colonel has at present a friend from town with him, he requests that he would present that gentleman his Lordship's compliments, and intreat the honour of his company also.'—'Here is another card Sir, for Miss Caustic.'—'Yes, yes, she always gets a counterpart.'—'But I shan't go,' said his sister; 'her Ladyship has got young Ladies enough to make fools of; an old woman is not worth the trouble.' 'Why then you must say so,' answered her brother; 'for the chaplain has a note here at the bottom, 'that an answer is requested. I suppose your great 'folks now-a-days contract with their *maitre d'hotel* 'by the head; and so they save half a crown, when 'one don't set down one's name for a cover.'—— 'But spite of the half crown you must go,' said the Colonel to me; 'you will find food for moralizing; and I shall like my own dinner the better. So return an answer accordingly, Sister; and do you hear, John, give my Lord's servant a slice of cold beef and a tankard of beer in the mean time. It is possible he is fed upon contract too; and for such patients, I believe, Sister Peggy, Dr. Buchan's Domestic Medicine recommends cold beef and a tankard.'

Z

N° 33. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1785.

I MENTIONED in my last Paper, that my friend Colonel Caustic and I had accepted an invitation to dine with his neighbour Lord Grubwell. Of that dinner I am now to take the liberty of giving some account to my readers. It is one advantage of that habit of observation, which as a thinking Lounger, I have acquired, that from most entertainments I can carry something more than the mere dinner away. I remember an old acquaintance of mine, a jolly carbuncle-faced fellow, who used to give an account of a company by the single circumstance of the liquor they could swallow. At such a dinner was one man of three bottles, four of two, six of a bottle and a half, and so on; and as for himself, he kept a sort of journal of what he had pouched, as he called it, at every place to which he had been invited during a whole winter. My reckoning is of another sort; I have sometimes carried off from a dinner, one, two, or three characters, swallowed half a dozen anecdotes, and tasted eight or ten insipid things, that were not worth the swallowing. I have one advantage over my old friend; I can digest what, in his phrase, I have pouched, without a headach.

When we sat down to dinner at Lord Grubwell's, I found that the table was occupied in some sort by two different parties, one of which belonged to my Lord, and the other to my Lady. At the upper end of my Lord's sat Mr. Placid, a man agreeable by profession, who has no corner in his mind, no prominence in his feelings, and, like certain chymical liquors, has the property of coalescing with every

thing. He dines with every body that gives a dinner, has seventeen cards for the seven days of the week, cuts up a fowl, tells a story, and hears a story told with the best grace of any man in the world. Mr. Placid had been brought by my Lord, but seemed inclined to desert to my Lady, or rather to side with both, having a smile on the right cheek for the one, and a simper on the left for the other.

Lord Grubwell being a patron of the fine arts, had at his board end, besides the layer out of his grounds, a discarded fidler from the opera-house, who allowed that Handel could compose a tolerable chorus, a painter, who had made what he called Fancy-portraits of all the family, who talked a great deal about Corregio; a gentleman on one hand of him, who seemed an adept in cookery; and a little blear-eyed man on the other, who was a connoisseur in wine. On horse-flesh, hunting, shooting, cricket, and cock-fighting, we had occasional dissertations, from several young gentlemen at both sides of his end of the table, who though not directly of his establishment, seemed, from what occurred in conversation, to be pretty constantly in waiting.

Of my Lady's division, the most conspicuous person was a gentleman who sat next her, Sir John——, who seemed to enjoy the office of her *Cicisbeo*, or *Cavaliere servente*, as nearly as the custom of this country allows. There was, however, one little difference between him and the Italian Cavaliere, that he did not seem so solicitous to serve as to admire the Lady, the little attentions being rather directed from her to him. Even his admiration was rather understood than expressed. The gentleman, indeed, to borrow a phrase from the grammarians, appeared to be altogether of the passive mood, and to consider every exertion as vulgar and unbecoming. He spoke mincingly, looked something more delicate

than man; had the finest teeth, the whitest hand, and sent a perfume around him at every motion. He had travelled, quoted Italy very often, and called this a tramontane country, in which, if it were not for one or two fine women, there would be no possibility of existing.

Besides this male attendant, Lady Grubwell had several female intimates, who seemed to have profited extremely by her patronage and instructions, who had learned to talk on all *town* subjects with such ease and confidence, that one could never have supposed they had been bred in the country, and had, as Colonel Caustic informed me, only lost their bashfulness about three weeks before. One or two of them, I could see, were in a professed and particular manner imitators of my Lady, used all her phrases, aped all her gestures, and had their dress made so exactly after her pattern, that the Colonel told me a blunt country gentleman, who dined there one rainy day, and afterwards passed the night at his house, thought they had got wet to the skin in their way, and had been refitted from her Ladyship's wardrobe. 'But he was mistaken,' said the Colonel; 'they only borrowed a little of her complexion.'

The painter had made a picture, of which he was very proud, of my Lady attended by a group of those young friends, in the character of Diana, surrounded by her nymphs, surprised by Acteon. My Lady, when she was showing it to me, made me take notice how very like my Lord, Acteon was. Sir John, who leaned over her shoulder, put on as broad a smile as his good-breeding would allow, and said it was one of the most monstrous clever things he had ever heard her Ladyship say.

Of my Lord's party there were some young men, brothers and cousins of my Lady's nymphs, who

showed the same laudable desire of imitating him, as their kinswoman did of copying her. But each end of the table made now and then interchanges with the other: some of the most promising of my Lord's followers were favoured with the countenance and regard of her Ladyship; while on the other hand, some of her nymphs drew the particular attention of Acteon, and seemed, like those in the picture, willing to hide his Diana from him. Amidst those different, combined, or mingled parties, I could not help admiring the dexterity of Placid, who contrived to divide himself among them with wonderful address. To the landscape-gardner he talked of clumps and swells; he spoke of harmony to the musician, of colouring to the painter, of hats and feathers to the young ladies, and even conciliated the elevated and unbending Baronet, by appeals to him about the key at Marseilles, the corso at Rome, and the gallery of Florence. He was once only a little unfortunate in a reference to Colonel Caustic, which he meant as a compliment to my Lady, 'how much more elegant the dress of the Ladies was now-a-days than formerly when they remembered it?' Placid is but very little turned of fifty.

Caustic and I were nearly 'mutes and audience to this act.' The Colonel, indeed, now and then threw in a word or two of that *dolce piccante;* that sweet and sharp sort in which his politeness contrives to convey his satire. I thought I could discover that the company stood somewhat in awe of him; and even my Lady endeavoured to gain his good-will by a very marked attention. She begged leave to drink his sister's health in a particular manner after dinner, and regretted exceedingly not being favoured with her company. 'She hardly ever stirs abroad, my Lady,' answered the Colonel; 'besides (looking slyly at some of her Ladyship's female friends,) she

is not young, nor I am afraid bashful enough for one of Diana's virgins.'

When we returned home in the evening, Caustic began to moralize on the scene of the day. 'We were talking,' said he to me, 't'oher morning, when you took up a volume of Cook's Voyages, of the advantages and disadvantages arising to newly-discovered countries from our communication with them; of the wants we shew them along with the conveniencies of life, the diseases we communicate along with the arts we teach. I can trace a striking analogy between this and the visit of Lord and Lady Grubwell to the savages here, as I am told they often call us. Instead of the plain wholesome fare, the sober manners, the filial, the parental, the family virtues, which some of our households possessed, these great people will inculcate extravagance, dissipation, and neglect of every relative duty; and then in point of breeding and behaviour, we shall have petulance and inattention, instead of bashful civility, because it is the fashion with fine folks to be easy; and rusticity shall be set off with impudence, like a grogram waistcoat with tinse binding, that only makes its coarseness more disgusting.'

'But you must set them right, my good Sir,' I replied, 'in these particulars. You must tell your neighbours, who may be apt, from some spurious examples, to suppose that every thing contrary to the natural ideas of politeness is polite, that in such an opinion they are perfectly mistaken. Such a caricature is indeed, as in all other imitations, the easiest to be imitated; but it is not the real portraiture and likeness of a high-bred man or woman. As good dancing is like a more dignified sort of walk, and as the best dress hangs the easiest on the shape; so the highest good-breeding, and the most highly polished fashion, is the nearest to nature, but to na-

ture in its best state, to that *belle nature* which works of taste (and a person of fashion is a work of taste) in every department require. It is the same in morals as in demeanour; a real man of fashion has a certain *retenue*, a degree of moderation in every thing, and will not be more wicked or dissipated than there is occasion for; you must therefore signify to that young man who sat near me at Lord Grubwell's, who swore immoderately, was rude to the chaplain, and told us some things of himself for which he ought to have been hanged, that he will not have the honour of going to the devil in the very best company.'

'Were I to turn preacher,' answered the Colonel, 'I would not read your homily. It might be as you say in former times; but in my late excursion to your city, I cannot say I could discover, even in the first company, the high polish you talk of. There was Nature, indeed, such as one may suppose her in places which I have long since forgotten; but as for her beauty or grace, I could perceive but little of it. The world has been often called a *theatre;* now the theatre of your fashionable world seems to me to have lost the best part of its audience; it is all either the yawn of the side boxes, or the roar of the upper gallery. There is no *pit* (as I remember the pit); none of that mixture of good-breeding, discernment, taste, and feeling, which constitutes an audience, such as a first-rate performer would wish to act his part to. For the simile of the theatre will still hold in this further particular, that a man to be perfectly well-bred, must have a certain respect and value for his audience, otherwise his exertions will generally be either coarse or feeble. Though indeed a perfectly well-bred man will feel that respect even for himself; and were he in a room alone,' said Caustic (taking an involuntary step or two, till he got oppo-

site to a mirror that hangs at the upper end of his parlour,) 'would blush to find himself in a mean or ungraceful attitude, or to indulge a thought gross, illiberal, or ungentlemanlike.' 'You smile, said Miss Caustic to me; 'but I have often told my brother, that he is a very Oroondates on that score; and your Edinburgh people may be very well bred, without coming up to his standard,' 'Nay, but,' said I, 'were I even to give Edinburgh up, it would not affect my position. Edinburgh is but a copy of a larger metropolis; and in every copy the defect I mentioned is apt to take place; and of all qualities I know, this of fashion and good breeding is the most delicate, the most evanescent, if I may be allowed so pedantic a phrase. 'Tis like the flavour of certain liquors, which it is hardly possible to preserve in the removal of them.' 'Oh! now I understand you,' said Caustic, smiling in his turn; 'like Harrowgate water for example, which I am told has spirit at the spring; but when brought hither, I find it, under favour, to have nothing but stink and ill taste remaining.'

I

N° 34. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 1785.

THAT we often make the misery, as well as 'the happiness we do not find,' is a truth which Moralists have frequently remarked, and which can hardly be too often repeated. 'Tis one of those specific maxims which apply to every character and to every situation, and which therefore, in different modes of

expression, almost every wise man has endeavoured to enforce and illustrate. Without going so far as the Stoics would have us, we may venture to assert, that there is scarce any state of calamity in which a firm and a virtuous mind will not create to itself consolation and relief; nor any absolute degree of prosperity and success in which a naturally discontented spirit will not find cause of disappointment and disgust.

But in such extremes of situation it is the lot of few to be placed. Of the bulk of mankind the life is passed amidst scenes of no very eventful sort amidst ordinary engagements and ordinary cares. But of these, perhaps, still more than of the others, the good or evil is in a great measure regulated by the temper and disposition of him to whom they fall out; like metals in coin, it is not alone their intrinsic nature, but also that impression which they receive from us, that creates their value. It must be material, therefore, in the art of happiness, to possess the power of stamping satisfaction on the enjoyments which Providence has put into our hands.

I have been led into these reflections from meeting lately with two old acquaintances, from whom I had, by various accidents, been a long while separated, but whose dispositions our early intimacy had perfectly unfolded to me, and the circumstances of whose lives I have since had occasion to learn.

When at school, Clitander was the pride of his parents and the boast of our master. There was no acquirement to which his genius was not equal; and though he was sometimes deficient in application, yet whenever he chose he outshone every competitor.

Eudocius was a lad of very inferior talents. He was frequently the object of Clitander's ridicule, but he bore it with an indifference that very soon disarmed his adversary; and his constant obligingness

and good humour made all his class-fellows his friends.

Clitander was born the heir of a very large estate, which coming to the possession of at a very early age, he set out on his travels, and continued abroad for a considerable number of years. In the accomplishments of the man, he was equally successful as he had been in the attainments of the boy, and attracted particular notice in the different places of his residence on the continent, as a young man from whom the highest expectations might reasonably be formed. But it was remarked by some intelligent observers, that he rather acquired than relished those accomplishments, and learned to judge more than to admire whatever was beautiful in nature, or excellent in art. At times he seemed, like other youthful possessors of ample fortunes, disposed to enjoy the means of pleasure which his situation enabled him to command. At other times, he talked with indifference or contempt both of those pleasures themselves, and of the companions with whom they had been shared. He remained longer abroad than is customary, as his friends said, to make himself master of whatever might be useful to his country or ornamental to himself; but in fact, he remained where he was, as I have heard himself confess, from an indifference about whither he should go; because, as he frankly said, he thought he should find the same fools at Rome as at Paris, at Naples as at Rome. In going through Hungary, he visited the quicksilver mines, where the miserable workmen, pent up for life, hear of the light of the sun, as of the beauties of another world. One of those, as Clitander and his party came up to him, was leaning on his mattock, under one of those dismal lamps that unfold the horrors of the place, eating the morsel of brown bread that is allowed them. What wretched fare!

said one of the company. But he seems to enjoy it! replied Clitander.

When he returned to England, he was surrounded by the young and the gay, who allured him to pleasure; and by more respectable characters, who invited him to business and ambition. With both societies he often mixed, but could scarcely be said to associate; to both he lent himself, as it were, for the time; but became the property of neither, and seemed equally dissatisfied with both.

When I saw him lately he was at his paternal seat, one of the finest places in one of the finest parts of the country. To my admiration of its improvements he assented with the coolness of a spectator who had often looked on them; yet I found that he had planned most of them himself. In the neighbourhood I found him respected but not popular; and even when I was told stories of his beneficence, of which there were many, they were told as deeds in which he was to be imitated rather than beloved. His hospitality was uncommonly extensive; but his neighbour partook of it rather as a duty than a pleasure. And though at table he said more witty and more lively things than all his guests put together, yet every body remarked how dull the dinner had been.

At his house I found Eudocius, who flew to embrace me, and to tell me his history since we parted. He told it rather more in detail than was necessary; but I thanked him for his minuteness, because it had the air of believing me interested in the tale. Eudocius was now almost as rich as Clitander; but his fortune was of his own acquisition. In the line of commerce, to which he had been bred, he had been highly successful. Industry, the most untainted uprightness, and that sort of claim which a happy disposition had upon every good man

he met, had procured him such advantages, that in a few years he found himself possessed of wealth, beyond his most sanguine expectations, and, as he modestly said, much beyond his merits: but he did himself injustice; he had all the merit which enjoying it thankfully, and using it well, could give.—At his house, to which I afterwards attended him, most things were good, and Eudocius honestly praised them all. He had a group of his neighbours assembled, all of whom were happy; but those who came from visiting Clitander were always the happiest. In his garden and grounds there were some beauties which Eudocius shewed you with much satisfaction; there were many deformities which he did not observe himself; if any other remarked them, he was happy they were discovered, and took a memorandum for mending them next year. His tenants and cottagers were contented and comfortable, or at least in situations that ought to make them so. If any of them came with complaints to Edocius, he referred them to his steward, but with injunctions to treat them indulgently; and when the steward sometimes told him he had been imposed on, he said he would not trust the man again; but repeated a favourite phrase of his, which he had learnt from somebody, but adopted from pure good nature, 'that he might be cheated of his money, but should not of his temper.' In this, as in every thing else, it was not easy to vex him, while on the other hand he was made happy at very little expence; he laughed at dull jokes, was pleased with bad pictures, praised dull books, and patronised very inferior artists—not always from an absolute ignorance in these things (though his taste, it must be owned, was none of the most acute), but because it was his way to be pleased, and that he liked to see people pleased around him.

It was not so with Clitander. Wanting that enthusiasm, that happy deception, which leads warmer, and indeed inferior minds, through life, he examined with too critical, perhaps too just an eye, its pleasures, its ambition, its love, its friendship, and found them empty and unsatisfying. Eudocius was the happy spectator of an indifferently played comedy; but Clitander had got behind the scenes, and saw the actors with all their wants and imperfections. Clitander, however, never shows the sourness or the melancholy of a misanthrope. He is not interested enough in mankind to be angry, nor is the world worth his being sad for. Thus he not only wants the actual pleasures of life, but even that sort of enjoyment which results from its sorrows.

Miserum te judico, quod nunquam fueris miser. SEN.

The only satisfaction he seems to feel, is that sort of detection which his ability enables him to make of the emptiness of the world's pleasures, the hypocrisy of its affected virtues, the false estimation of its knowledge, the ridiculousness of its pretended importance. Hence he is often a man of humour and of wit, and plays with both, with the appearance of gaiety and mirth. But this gaiety is not happiness. Such a detection may clothe one's face in smiles, but it cannot make glad the heart. In the gaiety of Clitander, however excited, there is little enjoyment. Clitander undervalues his audience, and never delivers himself up to them with that happy cheerfulness with which Eudocius tells his old stories, and every one laughs without knowing why.

In the apathy of a dull man, nobody is interested, and we consign him to its influence without reflection and without regret. But when one considers how much is lost to the world by the indifference of Cli-

tander, one cannot help lamenting that unfortunate perversion of talents, by which they are not only deprived of their value, but made instruments of ill fortune; which, if I may be allowed the expression, disappoints the bounty of Heaven, both to its possessor himself, and to those around him, whom it ought to have enriched.

V

N° 35. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 1785.

Among the apoligies for irregularity and dissipation none are of more pernicious tendency than those which are drawn from the good qualities with which that irregularity and dissipation are supposed to be generally accompanied. The warmth and openness of noble minds, it is said, are apt to lead them into extravagancies which the cold and the unfeeling can easily criticise, and may plausibly condemn. But in the same minds reside the virtues of magnanimity, disinterestedness, benevolence, and friendship, in a degree to which the tame and the selfish, who boast of the prudence and propriety of their conduct, can never aspire. The first resembles a luxuriant tree, which amidst its wild and wandering shoots, is yet productive of the richest fruit; the others, like a dry and barren stock, put forth a few regular but stunted branches, which require no pruning indeed, but from which no profit is to be reaped.

It might be worth while to inquire into the justice of this account, to the truth of which the young and

the gay are apt implicitly to assent; but the young and the gay have too much vivacity to reason, and as little inclination as leisure for inquiry: yet some of them who knew Flavillus, may listen for a moment while I tell them his history. 'Tis the last time they will be troubled with his name, or his misfortunes!

He was the heir of an estate which was once reckoned very considerable. It descended to him burdened with a good deal of debt, and with a variety of incumbrances; but still Flavillus was held to have succeeded to a great possession, his nominal rent-roll being a large one. At an early period of life, he entered into the army; but he soon quitted a profession where, in point of wealth, the prospects were not alluring; and where, in point of station, he had not patience to wait for the usual steps of advancement. Flavillus, both while he was in the army, and after he quitted it, was accounted one of the most agreeable and most accomplished men that was any where to be met with. Nor was this reputation undeserved. Having had a complete university education, he had all the learning of a philosopher, without any of that pedantry which often attends it; and having mixed a good deal in the world, he had all the ease of a man of fashion, without any of that flippancy which mere men of fashion are apt to acquire. Flavillus, from those qualities, became the darling of society. His company was universally courted; and it was considered as a high recommendation to any party of pleasure, that he was to be one of the number. Possessed of an indolence which unfitted him for business, having quitted the army, the only profession he ever had the least inclination to cultivate, and too negligent to think of retrieving the incumbrances on his estate by œconomy and schemes of prudence, he

gave himself completely up to the pleasures of society and allowed himself to be captivated by the popularity which his manners secured him, and by the general good-will with which he was constantly received.

It is easy to conjecture the effects of such a course of life on the circumstances of Flavillus. The debts and incumbrances on his estate were allowed to remain, and the expence he was led into added much to their amount. At first Flavillus felt a good deal of uneasiness on this ground; he made some feeble efforts to retrench his expence, and to mix less in expensive society; to dress more plainly, to give up public places, to go no more to taverns, to lose no more money at play. But these better resolutions sunk under his love of pleasure, and his temptations to habitual indulgence. He became at length afraid to think of his circumstances; and the very despair which that occasioned made him plunge more deeply into dissipation. Painfully conscious as he was of much mispent time and mispent fortune, he durst not look into the account of either.

The deeper, however, he plunged into dissipation, the fonder of him did his companions become. The circle of his acquaintance indeed came to be in some measure changed. At an early period of life, his company was select: at a later period he became less nice about his friends; but still Flavillus was accounted one of the finest fellows in the world. His bottle companions were ever loud in his praise, at the midnight riot his name was never mentioned without the highest panegyric, without the warmest profession of friendship, confirmed by the most sacred oaths, and accompanied with the most endearing expressions of delight. Amidst the vociferations of merriment, and the jollity of debauch, to have listened to the sounds which then

then were uttered, one would have thought that the Goddess of Friendship herself has descended upon earth, and was animating the voices of the companions of Flavillus.

With all this Flavillus was far from being happy. Superior to the companions he now lived with, he could not always avoid reflecting on the nothingness of his situation; and though he was afraid to think upon it, he could not help at times foreseeing that the means of his extravagance must draw to a close. His spirit on some occasions rose within him, and he formed unavailing plans to retrieve his situation, and act worthy of himself; but he had proceeded too far to be able easy to retract; he had sunk in his own esteem, and what was worse, was accustomed to feel that he had done so. In this state he remained for some time, the voice of reason and of right becoming more and more feeble, and the influence of present gratification strengthening with every fresh indulgence.

Matters, however, at length came to a crisis. Upon applying to his man of business, who had, without effect, made repeated remonstrances against his expensive course of life, he was told that there was no more money to be had—that his creditors, who had already had much patience, were now become too clamorous to be any longer flattered or amused; in short, he was informed in plain language, that without discharging his debts a jail must be the consequence.

Flavillus's mind was no longer what it had been. At a former period, had he foreseen such an event, it is hard to say what would have been the consequence. Now he stooped to the misery of his situation. The very night before he received this decisive intelligence he had been engaged in a debauch, which lasted from

dinner till morning; he had parted with his companions amidst the loudest exclamations of social joy and social affection: the next night they had resolved to repeat their bliss and reiterate their enjoyment.—At this second meeting Flavillus ventured to mention his situation. I will spare my readers an account of the mortifying indifference with which his story was received. Flavillus found that from those friends whom he had frequently heard boast of the warmth and generosity of their souls, when compared with the meaner and colder minds of the dull, the plodding, and the sober; from those men with whom he used to set the table in a roar, with whom he had a thousand times come under the most sacred bonds of attachment, and who had a thousand times sworn they could not live without him;—from all of them was he obliged to receive, in different terms, the same mortifying reply, that they could not afford him the smallest relief or assistance.

A gentleman, whom I shall here call Marcus, who had known Flavillus in younger days, who knew his good qualities, his accomplishments, so worthy of a better fate, who had often mourned over him, but who, from indignation at the dissipated course he had followed, had avoided his company, heard accidentally of this incident in his life. In the most delicate manner in the world, without his so much as knowing from whom the relief came, he was relieved, and, by this gentleman's bounty, was freed from the impending horror of a jail.

But Flavillus, though ruined by dissipation, had not yet fully attained either its apathy or its meanness. The generosity of Marcus, though it relieved his present distress, shewed him at once the station he had lost, and that to which he was reduced. His body, which his former course of life had enfeebled, was too weak to support the agitation of his mind

He retired to a little country village, where he might equally avoid the neglect of those companions by whom his former follies had been shared, and the reproach or the pity of those by whom they had been censured or shunned. Here he lived on a small pension which the same benevolent interposition procured him, till a lingering nervous disorder put a period to his sufferings.

'Twas but a few weeks ago I assisted at his funeral. There I saw one or two of his former associates who had taken the trouble to attend, who, after a few inquiries after the cause of his death, and a few common-place regrets, that so agreeable and good-hearted fellow should have been so unfortunate, made an appointment for a supper in the evening. Marcus put a plain stone over his grave. I never look on it without the mortifying reflection, with how many virtues it might have been inscribed! without lamenting that so excellent natural abilities as those of Flavillus, so much improved by education, and so susceptible of farther improvement, should have been lost to every worthy and valuable purpose; lost in a course of frivolous or criminal dissipation, amidst companions without attachment or friendship, amidst pleasures that afforded so little real happiness or enjoyment.

N° 36. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 8, 1785.

Divitias operosiores. HOR.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR,

'TIS but very lately that I became acquainted with your paper, our family only having taken it in last week for the first time, when it was recommended to my brother by Lady Betty Lampoon, who happened to be on a visit in our country. Her Ladyship said, it was a dear sweet satirical paper, and that one found all one's acquaintance in it. And sure enough I found some of my acquaintance in it (for I am the only reader among us), and so shall I tell Mr. John Homespun when I meet him. Only think of a man come to his years to go to put himself and his neighbours into print in the manner he has done. But I dare to say it is all out of spite and envy at our having grown so suddenly rich, by my brother's good fortune in India; and to be sure, Sir, things are changed with us from what I remember; and yet perhaps we are not so much to be envied neither, if all were known. Do tell me, Sir, how we shall manage to be as happy as people suppose our good fortune must have made us.

But perhaps, Sir, it is not the *fashion* (as my sister-in-law and Mons. de Sabot says) to be happy.—Lord, Sir, I had forgot you don't know Mons. de Sabot! But really my head is not so clear as it used to be. I

will try to tell you things in their order.—My brother, who, as Mr. Homespun has informed you, is returned home with a great fortune, is determined to live as becomes it, and sent down a ship-load of blacks in laced liveries, the servants in this country not being handy about fine things; though to tell you the truth, some of the Blackamoors don't give themselves much trouble about their work, and two of them never do a turn except playing on the French horn, and sometimes making punch, when it is wanted particularly nice.

Besides these, there came down in two chaises my brother's own valet de sham, my sister's own maid, a man cook, who has two of the negers under him, and Mons. de Sabot, whom my brother wrote to me he had hired for a butler; but, when he came, he told us he was *maitre dotelle*, and had been so to the Earl of C——, the Duke of N——, and two German princes. So, to be sure, we were almost afraid to speak to him, till we found he was as affable and obliging as could be, and told us every thing we ought to do to be fashionable, and like the great folks of London and Paris. Mons. de Sabot is acquainted with every one of them.

But then, Sir, it is so troublesome an affair to be fashionable! and so my father and mother, and the rest of us, who have never been abroad find. We used to be as cheerful a family as any in the country; and at our dinners and suppers, if we had not fine things, we had pure good appetites, and, after the table was uncovered, used to be as merry as grigs at cross purposes, questions and commands, or What's my thought like? But now we must not talk loud, nor laugh, nor walk fast, nor play at romping games; and we must sit quiet during a long dinner of two courses and a dessert, and drink wine and water,

and never touch our meat but with our fork, and pick our teeth after dinner, and dabble in cold water, and Lord knows how many other things: which Mons. de Sabot says every body *comi fo* does. And such a thing he tells me (for I am a sort of favourite and scholar of his) is *comi fo* in the first course, and such a thing in the second; and this in the entries, and that in the removes. *Comi fo*, it seems, means vastly fine in his language, though we country folks, if we durst own it, find the *comi fo* things often very ill tasted, and now and then a little stinking. But we shall learn to like them monstrously by and by, as Mons. de Sabot assures us.

My father is hardest of us all to be taught to do what he ought; and he cursed *comi fo* once or twice to Mons. de Sabot's face. But my brother and my sister-in-law are doing all that they can to wean him from his old customs, that he mayn't affront himself before company. He fought hard for his pipe and his spit-box; but my sister-in-law would not suffer the new window-curtains and chair covers to be put up till he had given over both. And, what do you think, Sir, the old gentleman was caught yesterday by my brother and a young Baronet of his acquaintance, who went into the stable to look at one of my brother's stud, as they call it, smoaking his pipe in one of the empty stalls. And I heard Sir Harry Driver give an account of it to my sister-in-law when they came in to supper, and how, as he said, 'he had *tallyho'd* old Squaretoes, as he slunk from his kennel.'

My brother, you must know, has a mind to be a parliament-man, and so he invites all the country, high and low, to eat and drink with him; and sometimes I have been sadly out of countenance, and so have we all, when some of his old acquaintance have told long stories of things which happened to them for-

merly, though ten to one my brother does not remember a syllable of them. As t'other day, when our school-master's son Samuel put him in mind of their going together to Edinburgh for the first time, and how they had but one pair of silk stockings between them, and my brother had them on in the morning to see a gentleman who was first cousin to an East India Director, and Sam got them in the evening to visit the principal of the college; and all this before Sir Harry Driver, Lord Squanderfield, and Lady Betty Lampoon.

Then my brother is turned an improver, which every body says is an excellent way of laying out his money, and is so public-spirited!—and the planner who has come to give directions about it tells us, that in a few years hence he will get five pounds for every five shillings he lays out now in that way. In the mean time, however, it gives him a great deal of trouble; when every thing is resolved upon to-day, 'tis a chance but it is all turned topsy-turvy to morrow; for his voters, as they call the gentlemen on my brother's side of the question, who come to visit us, have every one their own opinion, and are always giving him advice how to do things for the best. One told him lately he should level such a piece of ground which is in sight of the bow-window in the drawing-room; another, a few mornings after, blamed this first adviser for want of taste, and said he would give 500 guineas for such a knoll in the very spot where they had levelled it; and so they are building rocks there, and planting them as fast as they can. He pulled down a piece of an old church that stood in the way of what they call the approach to the house; and presently a gentleman from England told him a ruin was the very thing wanted in that place,—and so the old church must be built up a-new. Lord Squan-

derfield advised him to make a piece of water in the garden; and they had almost finished it, when Lady Betty convinced him that in summer it would be a puddle, as she termed it, that would stink him out of his house, and fly-blow every bit of meat at his table.

Lady Betty has been very useful to my sister-in-law too about the choice of the furniture, though that likewise has been a troublesome job, owing to bad advice in the beginning. We had got sofas and stuffed chairs in the drawing-room, which my Lady has made her change for cabrioles; and the damask beds she has persuaded her are not in the least fit for a country house; and so they are all taken down, and chintzes put up in their place.

In the same ship with the blacks, my brother brought down a great collection of pictures which were purchased for him at a sale in London, and are worth, I am told, Lord knows how much, though he got them, as he assures us for an old song; and yet several of them I have heard cost some hundreds of pounds. But this, between ourselves, is the most plaguy of all his fineries. Would you believe it, Sir, he is obliged to be two or three hours every morning in the gallery, with a little book in his hand, like a poor school-boy, getting by heart the names and the stories of all the men and women that are painted there, that he may have his lesson pat for the company that are to walk and admire the paintings till dinner is served up. And yet after all, he is sometimes mistaken about them, as last Thursday he told a gentleman that was looking at the pictures, that the half-naked woman above the chimney piece, was done for one Caroline Marrot (I suppose from the picture of some Miss no better than she should be); whereas the gentleman, Mr. Gusto, declared

it was as like Widow Renny as one egg is like another.

I could tell you a great deal more of embarrassments and vexations in the enjoyment of our good fortune; but I am sure I must have wearied you by my scribble-scrabble account of what I have told. It will be sufficient to show you that Mr. Homespun has not so much cause for envy as from his letter I presume he feels against us, and will, I hope, also procure a little of your good counsel how to make a *comi fo* life somewhat more comfortable to the greatest part of our family, and in particular to your humble servant,

MARJORY MUSHROOM.

Z

N° 37. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1785.

THE mythology of the ancients has given rise to many an elegant allusion, and adorned many a beautiful description.

In a book published lately at Paris, containing an account of the principal gems in the cabinet of the Duke of Orleans, is the following excellent illustration of the pleasing effects of the popular religion of antiquity.

'The delightful fictions built on their religious system,' says the author of this work, 'have peopled and animated all nature, and made a solid temple of the vast universe. Those flowers, whose varied and shining beauty we so much admire, are the tears of Aurora. It is the breath of Zephyrus which gently

agitates the leaves. The soft murmurs of the waters are the sighs of the Naiads. A god impels the winds. A god pours out the rivers. Grapes are the gift of Bacchus. Ceres presides over the harvest. Orchards are the care of Pomona. Does a shepherd sound his reed on the summit of a mountain, it is Pan who with his pastoral pipe returns the amorous lay. When the sportsman's horn rouses the attentive ear, it is Diana armed with her bow and quiver, more nimble than the stag she pursues, who takes the diversion of the chace. The Sun is a god, who, riding on a car of fire, diffuses his light through the world. The Stars are so many divinities, who measure with their golden beams the regular process of time. The Moon presides over the silence of the night, and consoles the world for the absence of her brother. Neptune reigns in the seas, surrounded by the Nereides, who dance to the joyous shells of the Tritons. In the highest heavens is seated Jupiter, the father and master of men and gods: under his feet roll the thunders formed by the Cyclops in the cavern of Lemnos; his smile rejoices nature, and his nod shakes the foundation of Olympus. Surrounding the throne of their sovereign, the other divinities quaff the nectar from a cup presented to them by the young and beautiful Hebe. In the middle of the bright circle shines with distinguished lustre the unrivalled beauty of Venus, alone adorned with a splendid girdle, on which the graces and sports for ever play; and in her hand is a smiling boy, whose power is universally acknowledged by heaven and earth.'

It is impossible to read this elegant passage without feeling something of that delusion it describes; and the reader who is conversant in the classics will at once call to his recollection many of those animated descriptions and pleasing allusions with which those admirable works so much abound.

For my own part, however, while I must always remember, with a pleasing sort of gratitude, the delight which I have received from the poets of Greece and of Rome: and while I recollect, with a species, of enthusiasm, that rapture I first received from the animated accounts of nature with which their works are adorned; I cannot help sometimes thinking that the taste which they have produced in modern times, that fondness of imitation they have given birth to, has in some respects hurt the works of the moderns, and, instead of improving, helped to spoil many an exertion of genius. The mythological allusions of the ancients were grafted on the popular opinions of the country; as such to a reader of the times they were natural; the mind easily acknowledged their justice, and something like an implicit belief attended their perusal. Even when they are perused by a modern, in the writings of the ancients, he acquires some portion of this belief. The same ductility of imagination which creates our sympathy and interest in the passions and feelings of an Achilles and an Æneas, though they lived in a distant region, and a period long since past, makes us enter into their religious creed, and the effects thereby produced. Our reason is for a time suspended; and we can for a moment suppose Minerva to descend from heaven to assist a Grecian hero, or Eolus to inflate the winds at the suit of Juno, to overwhelm in the billows the unfortunate son of a rival goddess.

But those animated and personified descriptions, however natural in an ancient author, and however they may interest even a modern reader by the same sympathy which engages us in the fate of a hero who dried a thousand years ago, have now ceased to be natural. When used by a modern writer, they do not proceed from an animated mind, impressed and governed by the belief of his countrymen, but are

the effect of a mere copy, the feeble offspring of a cold and servile imitation.

Whether it has proceeded from this cause I know not; but while I feel the most pleasing delusion from the mythological fictions of the ancient authors, I have always felt something very much the reverse from the same fictions when appearing in the works of the moderns. The scenes which nature lays before us, and the actions of those men who are placed in interesting situations, when well described, and naturally represented, must ever be delightful; but, when in a modern author I see nature left as it were behind, and borrowed description and allusion made use of, I have ever found my mind, instead of being gratified, cheated of that pleasure which it wished to enjoy. The delusion in which I was fond to indulge has been removed, and fanciful conceit has usurped the place of nature.

Another bad consequence of this servile imitation of the ancients, of this borrowing what was natural in them, but which is no longer so in us, has been to prevent modern authors from studying nature as it is, from attempting to draw it as it really appears; and, instead of giving genuine descriptions, it leads them to give those only which are false and artificial.

Every reader acquainted with our modern authors will easily recal a variety of passages to illustrate these remarks.

To take an instance from the works of an author who does the highest honour to this country, what can be more absurd than the following lines as a description of Windsor Forest?

> See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pomona crown'd,
> Here blushing Flora paints th' enamelled ground,
> Here Ceres' gifts in waving prospect stand,
> And nodding tempt the jovial reapers hand.

This is surely not a description of Windsor Forest,

In like manner, the description in the same poem, of Thames shedding tears for Cowley's death, must surpass all modern credulity; and of an equally unnatural kind is the transformation of Lodona, the daughter of father Thames.

In the Pastorals of the same author, what strange effects are produced by the mourning of a shepherd boy along the side of the Thames!

> There while he mourn'd, the streams forgot to flow,
> The flocks around a dumb compassion show,
> The Naiads wept in ev'ry wat'ry bow'r,
> And Jove consented in a silent show'r.

The same shepherd, thus describes the effects of his numbers:

> And yet my numbers please the rural throng,
> Rough satyrs dance, and Pan applauds my song.

It is unnecessary to multiply examples; the descriptive poems of the moderns are full of them.

One author deserves to be excepted, an author who has been justly deemed an original, and whose character of originality is in a great measure owing to his having painted nature as it is, and laid aside the mythological allusions of antiquity.—Thomson, in his *Seasons*, may be styled the great poet of Nature. In that poem he has described the whole varied year, and the different scenes which its variations produce.

'This author,' says a distinguished critic, is entitled to one praise of the highest kind; his mode of thinking and of expressing his thoughts, is original. He thinks in a peculiar train, and he thinks always as a man of genius; he looks round on nature and on life with the eye which Nature bestows only on a poet; the eye that distinguishes, in every thing presented to its view, whatever there is on which imagination can delight to be detained, and

with a mind that once comprehends the vast, and attends to the minute. The reader of the Seasons wonders that he never saw before what Thomson shows him, and that he never yet has felt what Thomson expresses.'

Great part of this high praise appears to me to have arisen from what has been observed, of Thomson's having studied nature, and painted it as it is. Hardly, and with very few exceptions, will he be found endeavouring to adorn or heighten his descriptions with the religious fictions of antiquity.

As this author has drawn his pictures of nature from nature itself, so the nearer we bring his pictures to the originals from which he draws, the more will we admire them; the nearer our examination is, the more will our mind be filled and kindled with those sentiments which his descriptions produce. They resemble those striking likenesses, those highly finished portraits, which we examine by the side of the persons who sit for them. I am never more delighted with Thomson's Winter, the best of his Seasons, than when I read it in the month of December, and listen to the 'savage howl of the blast,' and see the 'sky saddened with the gather'd storm.'

A

N° 38. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1785.

I HAPPENED a few evenings ago, to have an appointment with a friend of mine, a gentleman of the law, which some particular business prevented him from keeping with his usual punctuality. While I waited for him in his study, I took down from one of his

shelves a book at random, to amuse myself with till he should come in. In my character of Lounger, I have learned never to put back a book because its subject promises to be a dull one. Though this was a law folio, therefore, I sat down contentedly to peruse it; having often experienced, that, in books where I looked for the least entertainment, I have unexpectedly met with the most. So it happened in this law treatise; where, on the chapter of Marriage, which chanced to turn up to me, I found the nice distinctions and subtelties of legal investigation so illuminated with a variety of interesting cases, that I shall certainly recommend the book, and particularly the above-mentioned chapter of it, to all my young friends who are engaged in the study of that dry and intricate science. I am persuaded their imaginations will not be less exercised than their judgments, in following the learned author through the numerous pointed illustrations which he gives of the doctrines there laid down. Of those doctrines the abstract seems to be, that though certain smaller deceptions are not sufficient for setting aside a matrimonial engagement; yet a very high degree of deceit made use of by one of the parties to influence and inveigle the other, will render the marriage void and null *ab initio*, as if no such contract had ever been made.

I was deeply engaged in those speculations, when my friend cut them short by entering the room; and, as his time is precious, we had no leisure to follow them together; though I had much inclination to have asked his assistance in clearing up some legal doubts which the author's reasoning had created in my mind. When I got home at night, the subject recurred to my memory; but, beside a warm fire in a cold evening, even the thoughts of marriage will not keep a man awake. I insensibly fell asleep

in my chair, when a dream took up (as is generally the case) the thread of my waking thoughts, and pursued it in the following whimsical manner.

Methought I was carried into a great hall, which, in its gloom, its antique ornaments, and its dustiness, resembled some of our courts of justice ; at the further end of which was seated, in the dress and with the *insignia* of a judge the learned and worthy author of the treatise above mentioned, By one of the attendants of the court I was informed, that his office was a sort of chancellorship of matrimony, with the power of confirming or annuling all marriages, as in equity and good conscience should seem to him proper ; that this was one of the days appointed for hearings ; and that the parties, complainants and respondents, were waiting without, ready to be called in to state their complaints and defences. I, who am a bachelor, which I believe I formerly hinted to my readers, felicitated myself on this happy opportunity of instruction and entertainment, and sat down on one of the benches, to hear with attention the different causes that should be argued.

The first person who came to the bar was a man of rather an ungracious appearance, and a countenance not at all expressive of good humour. He exhibited his complaint, and prayed for a dissolution of his marriage on the head of deception in his wife's temper : who, as he informed the judge, had made herself appear before marriage one of the sweetest and most engaging young women in the world—that during her virgin state she had never been seen, at least by the complainant, with a single frown on her brow, and was the very life and soul of every company she was in ; but that she had not been married a week, when he discovered that she was (saving the court's presence) a very devil incarnate ; that scarce

a day passed in which she did not abuse himself, ill-treat his friends, and whip all the children round; and that he was obliged to change his servants every half-year, except one old cross devil of a cook-maid, whom she kept to vex and plague him. The lady being called on for her defence, denied any deception by which the marriage had been brought about or could now be annulled; for that all her acquaintance could testify how good-natured she was when she was not contradicted; and that before marriage her husband had never contradicted her. She likewise pleaded recrimination in bar of his complaint; and offered to prove that he himself was one of the most cross-tempered men in the world. The judge dismissed the complaint; but recommended to the parties, since they seemed equally dissatisfied, to separate by mutual consent. The husband seemed inclined to adopt this proposition; but the lady rejected it; and, flinging out of court with a toss up of one side of her hoop, said, she had more spirit than to indulge him in that. The husband growled something, which I could not hear, and followed her.

The second complainant was dressed in a very shabby coat, and had a very indecent length of beard on his face. He prayed a dissolution of his marriage, from a gross deception in point of his wife's person and appearance. He was, he said, chiefly induced to the match, from the beauty of her face and the elegance of her figure, which first had made her his toast, then his mistress, and lastly his wife: That for some little time after his marriage, this deception was perfectly kept up: That in a few months, however, he began to be sensible of it; and after her becoming pregnant of her first child, it was apparent to every body: That, subsequent to that period, his wife totally neglected all attention

to her shape and complexion; and had ever since been so perfect a slattern as to have forfeited all pretensions to those qualities, on the faith of which he had married her. The lady made no appearance, which some one in court suggested was owing to its being so early an hour, as she seldom rose till twelve, and never was dressed till three. Indeed, upon some question of the judge, it came out, that the husband had never seen her before marriage at an earlier hour, and seldom even then, but at great dinners, private balls, and public assemblies. His lordship delayed the further consideration of the cause till another day, recommending to the gentleman, when he appeared there again, to shew the respect due to the court, by having his beard shaved, and putting on a clean shirt.

The third prosecutor was an elderly gentleman with a wrinkled face, and a body seemingly very infirm, who came forward to the bar by the help of a staff, or rather crutch. He represented to the court that he had married a few years before, after having lived a bachelor till he was turned of sixty, a young, innocent girl, as he imagined, who had been bred up, at her father's house in the country, in perfect ignorance of the town, its expences and amusements, who knew only how to knit, work fringes, and border an apron, to assist at making of a pudding, and constructing a gooseberry-pie; whose greatest expence was a silk gown once in two years, with a callico of her own making for morning wear; and whose highest pleasure consisted in dancing at a country wedding, or a Christmas gambol. But that, not long after she was married, she contrived to have him bring her to town, where she spent as much money in one month as it had cost her father to keep her all her life before; and actually wore, at this moment, a cap and feathers, the price of which

would have clothed her for a whole year in the country: That she was scarcely ever at home, except when she had asked a dozen fine people to dinner or supper, and was seldom in bed till three in the morning: That she would not suffer any of his former companions to approach her, but kept company only with dissipated young people of the other sex, or extravagant and giddy women of her own. And therefore, from all those circumstances, shewing the highest degree of deception under which he had been inveigled to marry, he prayed a dissolution of the matrimonial engagement, dropping some hints at the same time, that the young lady might do very well for a younger and a gayer husband, and that he would come down handsomely, to make her worth another man's taking. To this complaint, it was answered on the part of the lady, that there was no sort of deception in the case; that she had all along declared she did not care a farthing for her intended husband, but on the contrary hated and abhorred him: That he had bribed her parents, who had partly frightened and partly cajoled her into the match, by the offer of large settlements, and the flattering prospect of being the wife of a very rich man; so that, in the very nature of the contract, she gave up her person to her said husband in exchange for the enjoyment of such pleasures as his fortune could enable her to command for the present, and the hopes of what a large jointure might procure for the future: That, therefore, all the finery, amusements, and expence, which he complained of, were only parts of the first clause of the agreement; and that whatever vexation or uneasiness her conduct might create to him, were but justifiable means of fulfilling the accomplishment of the second. The Chancellor delivered his opinion in favour of the respondent; but proposed, in compassion to the hus-

band (which, however, the worthy judge declared his conduct had little merited,) that they should compromise matters, by the lady's renouncing her right to the man, on being immediately vested in her jointure. The lady was deliberating on this proposal, when her Lord declared himself in the negative; and clearing his voice with a hem, hobbled out of court in a step somewhat firmer than that in which he entered, saying, Nobody could tell which of them might have the benefit of survivorship.

The next case was pretty similar to the foregoing, except that the plaintiff was the wife and the defendant her husband; an old lady of three-score *versus* a young stout fellow of five-and-twenty. She alledged, that when a virgin she had been made to believe he loved her to desperation; but had discovered, the very day of the wedding, that he was only enamoured of twenty thousand pounds she happened to possess in the Long Annuities. The husband denied the charge of deceiving her; for that she knew from the beginning of their acquaintance, that he wished to marry the Long Annuities, which he said, smiling, he would endeavour to make shorter. The lady on this lost temper. 'Do you dare to say so, Sir?' she exclaimed; 'you, whom I saved from a jail; you, who, before I took compassion on you, had not a coat to your back, nor a dinner to your belly? Do you dare to look in my face, and say you did not deceive me?'—'Madam,' replied the spark, with an easy impudent air, 'do you venture to shew that face and to say so?' On this she broke out into such a violent passion, and was so vehement in her outcries, that the noise awaked me.—'Twas but a dream,' said I, starting from my chair;—'and yet—'tis as well I am a bachelor.'

N° 39. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1785.

A Judge is just, a Chancellor juster still,
A Gownman learned, a Bishop what you will,
Wise, if a Minister, &c. POPE.

It is an old, and has been a frequent observation, that men of genius seldom succeed in the common business of life. I have no where, however, found it so happily illustrated, as by a question of Swift's, in a letter to Lord Bolingbroke:—'Did you never (says he) observe one of your clerks cutting his paper with a blunt ivory knife? Did you ever know the knife fail to go the right way? whereas, if he had used a razor or a pen-knife, he had odds against him of spoiling a whole sheet.'

The very idea of genius and of fine parts, implies that they should be rare and uncommon. The ordinary course of society, therefore, has not been left to depend upon them; but it has been wisely ordered, that the business of life, almost in all its departments, should admit of being carried on by such men, and with such talents, as are every day to be met with.

The unexperienced and the vulgar are apt to judge of talents from the success with which they are attended; to estimate the difficulty of situations from their supposed importance, or from the attention which they draw, and the rank which they confer in society.

With them, the lawyer or the physician who has obtained high reputation, or arrived at high practice, is concluded to possess more than ordinary talents for his profession; and if a person has commanded an

army or a fleet with success; if he has figured in either house of Parliament; if he has made himself of importance to government; and filled a high department in the state; the public set no bounds to their admiration, and every one concludes the genius and talents of such a man to be of the highest magnitude.

When we resist, however, the glare of success, and the impression of public opinion, and call experience to our aid in the examination of particular instances, we shall find not only that all these situations have been attained, but that they have been filled, with credit to the possessors, and satisfaction to the public, by men whose talents and whose virtues were no ways extraordinary. Nay, perhaps, on a closer investigation, we shall be convinced, that such persons owed to the mediocrity of their talents, and the defects or weaknesses of their character, that elevation which to many has appeared the attainment of genius and the reward of virtue.

Lelius possessed uncommon talents. He derived from nature a correct judgment, a sound and penetrating understanding; and his natural endowments were cultivated by a liberal education, an early acquaintance with the best writers, and a familiar intercourse with men of genius and of letters. There were few branches of public or of national business, respecting which he was not possessed of ample information. His views with regard to them were always liberal, generally profound, and seldom failed of being just and well founded.

As a speaker, Lelius seldom addressed himself to the passions or the fancy of his audience. He had, however, an easy and unembarrassed elocution, a sufficient command of language to communicate his views with clearness and perspicuity. His style, though simple and unadorned, was pure and correct;

and his manner, though plain, was forcible and manly. He had obtained a seat in the House of Commons, at a time of life when his reputation for knowledge was generally established, when his talents were in their fullest vigour; and if at any time he offered his sentiments, he never failed of being listened to with attention, or of finding them received with that respect to which they were so well entitled.

The talents of Lelius, however, were of a kind which very seldom disposed him to make that effort. Accustomed to investigate with accuracy, to view his subject in every possible light, and to see the force of every difficulty which presented itself, he was not easily satisfied with the extent of his information, nor convinced of the justice of his opinions; and men of more limited views and shallower understandings, but of bolder or of rasher spirits, were generally allowed to carry away the reputation of that knowledge, and of those talents, the extent of which would not allow Lelius to display them.

Cornelius had obtained an education equally liberal, and had the same opportunities to improve himself by books and conversation; nor were his knowledge and information less extensive than those of Lelius. He was not perhaps altogether his equal in acuteness of understanding or strength of judgment; but, if he fell short in these, he no less surpassed him in a brilliancy of fancy and vigour of imagination, improved by an early acquaintance with whatever is beautiful or sublime in the classical productions of ancient or of modern times.

Full of sentiment and of feeling, enlivened by fancy, enriched by imagery, and often flowing in a style of the most classic beauty, the eloquence of Cornelius could not fail to command attention, and to be listened to with pleasure.

But, while his knowledge and eloquence gained to Cornelius the reputation of an accomplished scholar and a fine speaker, his ideas were often too refined, and his views too loose for business. His eloquence lost its power of persuasion, from an idea that it was calculated to dazzle rather than to inform; and though he often spoke with applause, and sometimes with success, it never procured him the reputation of a man of business, nor raised him to any considerable share of public trust or public power. If it had, we should in all probability have seen how widely that fancy and imagination, by which Cornelius was so well qualified to display supposed advantages or blemishes in the measures and the conduct of others, differ from that cool judgment and those plain talents which are fit to direct men in the choice of their own.

Claudius had neither the profound knowledge of Lelius, nor the genius and imagination of Cornelius, and he had received an education much less liberal than that of either.

Claudius, however, with little knowledge, no fineness of genius, and a taste altogether uncultivated, had derived from nature a quickness of parts and readiness of apprehension, which, for the common purposes of life, are of inestimable advantage. The reach of his understanding, and the range of his ideas were limited; but it was an understanding of that kind which within these limits discerned its object with clearness, and formed its opinions on all occasions with celerity and decision.

Claudius's eloquence could neither compare in purity or correctness with that of Lelius, nor in eloquence and beauty with that of Cornelius. The same cast of mind, however, which gave to Claudius a quickness in forming his opinions, gave him a readiness in calling up and bringing together those views

and arguments which seemed fitted to support them, as well as a facility of clothing his ideas in language, which, though generally incorrect, and seldom elegant, was always clear, and derived from the sanguine and ardent mind of the speaker a certain degree of warmth and force, the effects of which, in a popular assembly, are often found superior to the justest reasoning and the most finished eloquence.

If the speeches of Claudius were less beautiful than those of Cornelius, they seldomer wandered from the subject; and they were not only better adapted to their object, but had more the appearance of plainness and sincerity. Though they afforded less pleasure, they had a stronger tendency to convince; and had often credit for more solidity, not from their greater weight of argument, but from a want of those ornaments by which the arguments of Cornelius were accompanied. If he thought with less precision, and had less knowledge of his subject than Lelius, he never hesitated, like him, amidst the labour of illustration, or with an anxiousness for perspicuity, but pressed forward on his hearers with a boldness which they often mistook for proof, and a confidence that passed for demonstration.

The same turn of mind which ensured the success of Claudius as a speaker, not only obtained him a higher reputation, but in reality conferred upon him a greater capacity for the conduct of public business, for the ordinary detail of which his plain good sense was more adapted, than the lively fancy and fine genius of Cornelius; for such business his bold and decisive temper was better fitted, than that understanding which in Lelius was attended with an indecision, and an undetermined anxiety, which the hurry of business and the course of affairs will not admit of.

On a review of these characters, therefore, while we respect the superior understanding of Lelius, and

admire the fine genius and accomplishments of Cornelius, we at the same time see that they were less fitted for the conduct of affairs, and the bustle of life, than the active, though less profound understanding, and the sound, though less brilliant and less cultivated talents of Claudius; we easily perceive why these not only did, but why they were likely, and indeed entitled to confer superior success in the attainment of those objects at which they had chosen to aspire.

Such examples, I believe, almost every period would afford, if of every period we were able to collect the history from impartial and unbiassed testimony. Were the characters of those who have attained stations of eminence always drawn by well-informed or faithful relators, whose views were not dazzled by grandeur, or their praise secured by patronage, we should find the elevation of such men ascribable to talents of a much lower rank than those lofty attributes with which their panegyrists invest them; and could the unsuccessful find historians, their relations would frequently convince us, that, independently of the numberless accidents which disturb the course of society, and disappoint the best-founded hopes and most probable means of success, even in those departments of life where genius and talents may be supposed most necessary, men are as apt to fail from too large as from too small a share of those envied endowments.

And if we take into the account that dignity of soul, often the attendant of high talents, which places them above the accommodating compliances of inferior minds; or the effect of those delicate feelings from which the man of genius will often find himself hurt by incidents to which common spirits can easily submit; we shall discover many additional sources of that disappointment which he is apt to

meet with, and be still more satisfied, that superior talents and fine genius are instruments too finely tempered for the common drudgery of life, and were not meant to reap their reward from the successful pursuit of business or ambition.

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N° 40. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER, 5, 1785.

To the Author of the Lounger.

SIR,

In the works of your predecessors, as well as in every other book of didactic wisdom, much stress is laid on the advantages of a cultivated education, of an early acquaintance with the celebrated authors of antiquity. From Cicero downwards (and indeed much more anciently than Cicero), the benefits of learning have been enumerated, which is held forth as the surest road to respect, to advancement, and to happiness.

There was a time, Mr. Lounger, when this was my own opinion; and, seconded by the wishes of my parents, I early applied myself to every branch of learning which their circumstances, rather narrow ones, could set within my reach. As I was intended for the church, I received an academical education suited to that profession; and acquired besides a considerable knowledge, as was generally allowed, in different departments of science not absolutely requisite to the situation of a clergyman. For the acquisition of these I was indebted to the generous assistance of a gentleman whose godson I happened to be. He used to say, that a clergyman in this country should know

something more than divinity; that he must be the physician, the geographer, and the naturalist of his parish: and accordingly, to the scanty allowance of my father, he made an addition equal to the procuring me an opportunity of acquiring the different branches of knowledge connected with those studies.

By the favour of the same gentleman, I lately procured a recommendation to a friend of his, a Baronet in my native county, who has in his gift the presentation to a considerable living, of which the present incumbent is in such a valetudinary state, as makes his surviving long a matter of very little probability. To this recommendation a very favourable answer was received, expressive of the great regard which the Baronet and his family bore to the gentleman who patronised me, and accompanied with what we thought a very fortunate piece of condescension and politeness, an invitation for me to spend a week or two at the Baronet's country-seat during the autumn vacation. Of this I need not say how happy we were to accept. My family rejoiced at the introduction which I was about to procure to the notice and complacency of a great man's house, and considered it as the return which they had always hoped for all their trouble and expence about my education. My own pride was not silent on the subject. I looked on this visit as an opportunity afforded me of displaying the talents with which I flattered myself I was endowed, and the knowledge I had been at such pains to attain.

When I arrived at the Baronet's, I found him and his Lady a good deal disappointed with my appearance and address, which I now first perceived to want something which was essential to good company. I felt an awkwardness, which my want of mixing with the world had occasioned, and an embarrassment which all my knowledge did not enable me to over-

come. For these, however, Sir John and Lady F—— felt rather compassion than displeasure, and delivered me over to the valet de chambre, to make me somewhat smarter, as they called it, by having my hair more modishly dressed, and the cut of my coat altered; an improvement which I rather felt as an indignity, than acknowledged as a favour. These preliminaries being adjusted, I was suffered to come into company, where I expected to make up for the deficiency of my exterior, by displaying the powers of my mind and the extent of my knowledge. But I discovered, to my infinite mortification, that my former studies had been altogether misapplied, and that in my present situation they availed me nothing. My knowledge of the learned languages, of classical authors, of the history, the philosophy, and the poetry of the ancients, I met with no occasion to introduce, and no hearers to understand; but it was found that I could neither carve, play whist, sing a catch, or make up one in a country dance. A young lady, a visitor of the family, who was said to be a great reader, tried me with the enigmas of the Lady's Magazine, and declared me impracticably dull. Geography, astronomy, or natural history, Sir John and his companions neither understood nor cared for; but some of them reminded the Baronet, in my presence, of a clergyman they had met with in one of their excursions, a man of the most complete education, who was allowed to be the best bowler in the county, a dead shot, rode like the devil (these were the gentleman's words), and was a sure hand at finding a hare.

If these qualities are not very clerical, they may however be deemed innocent; but I find, from the discourse of the family, that some other things are required of Sir John's parson, which it would not be so easy for a good conscience to comply with. He must now and then drink a couple of bottles, when

the company chuses to be frolicksome; he must wink at certain indecencies in language and irregularities in behaviour; and once when Sir John had sat rather longer than usual after dinner, he told me that a clergyman, to be an honest fellow, must have nothing of religion about him.

In the seclusion of a college, I may perhaps have over rated the usefulness of science, and the value of intellectual endowments; my pride of scholarship, therefore, I should be willing to overcome, since I find that learning confers so little estimation in the world: but as, on the score of qualifications, I am incapable of what is desired, and, in the article of indulgences, will never submit to what is expected, is it not my duty, Mr. Lounger, to resign my pretensions to the living which was promised me; though I dread the reproaches of my parents, whom the prospect of having me so soon provided for had made happy; though I fear to offend my benefactor who recommended me to Sir John, and at the same time assured me that he was one of the best sort of men he knew; yet surely to purchase patronage and favour by such arts is unworthy, to insure them by such compliances is criminal.

I am, &c.

MODESTUS.

In the course of my late excursion to the country, I have seen some instances of the evil complained of by my correspondent, which equally surprised and grieved me. The proprietor of a country parish, if he has the true pride and feeling of his station, will consider himself as a kind of sovereign of the domain; bound like all other sovereigns, as much for his own sake as for theirs, to promote the in-

terests and happiness of his people. So much of both depend on the choice of their pastor, that perhaps there is no appointment which he has the power of making, more material to the prosperity and good order of his estate. The advantages of rational religion, or the evils which arise from its abuse, which are often the effects of a proper or improper nomination of a clergyman, form a character of the people of a district not more important to their morals and eternal interests, than to their temporal welfare and prosperity.

I was very much pleased, in my late visit at Colonel Caustic's with the appearance and deportment of the clergyman of his parish, who was a frequent visitor of my friend's and his sister's. The Colonel, after drawing his character in a very favourable way, concluded with telling me, that he had seen something of the world, having officiated in the early part of his life as the chaplain of a regiment. To this circumstance, I confess, I was inclined to impute some of the Colonel's predilection in his favour: but a little acquaintance with him convinced me, that he had done the good man no more than justice in his eulogium. There was something of a placid dignity in his aspect; of a politeness, not of form but of sentiment, in his manner; of a mildness, undebased by flattery, in his conversation, equally pleasing and respectable. He had now no family, as Miss Caustic informed me, having had the misfortune to lose his wife, and two children she had brought him, a good many years ago. But his parishioners are his family, said she. His look indeed was parental, with something above the cares, but not the charities of this world; and over a cast of seriousness, and perhaps melancholy, that seemed to be reserved for himself, there was an easy cheerfulness, and now and

then a gaiety, that spoke to the innocent pleasures of life a language of kindness and indulgence.

'"Tis the religion of a gentleman,' said Colonel Caustic—'"Tis the religion of a philosopher,' said I.—'"Tis something more useful than either,' said his sister. 'Did you know his labours, as I have sometimes occasion to do! The composer of differences; the promoter of peace and of contentment; the encourager of industry, sobriety, and all the virtues that make the lower ranks prosperous and happy. He gives to religion a certain graciousness which allures to its service, yet in his own conduct he takes less indulgence than many that preach its terrors. The duties of his function are his pleasures, and his doctrine is, that every man will experience the same thing, if he brings his mind fairly to the trial: that to fill our station well is in every station to be happy.'

'The great and the wealthy, I have heard the good man say,' continued the excellent sister of my friend, 'to whom refinement and fancy open a thousand sources of delight, do not make the proper allowance for the inferior rank of men. That rank has scarce any exercise of mind or imagination but one, and that one is religion; we are not to wonder if it sometimes wanders into the gloom of superstition, or the wilds of enthusiasm. To keep this principle warm but pure, to teach it as the gospel has taught it, 'the mother of good works,' as encouraging, not excusing our duties, the guide at the same time, and the sweetner of life; to dispense this sacred treasure as the balm of distress, the cordial of disease, the conqueror of death! These are the privileges which I enjoy, which I hope I have used for the good of my people: they have hitherto shed satisfaction on my life, and I trust will smooth its close!'

'Tis the religion of a Christian!' said Miss Caustic.

Z

N° 41. SATURDAY, NOV. 12, 1785.

Pandere res alta nocte et caligne mersas. VIRG.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR,

THOUGH the present age is undoubtedly possessed of a great deal of knowledge and science of which former periods could not boast, yet it must, on the other hand, be allowed, that we are apt to plume ourselves upon our acquirements fully as much as we are entitled to. We pretend a superiority over ancient times, not only on account of the discoveries we have made, but of the prejudices we have overcome, and smile with a contemptuous self-importance on the easy faith of our ancestors.

Of this latter sort is the credit which almost every modern takes for a total disbelief of spirits, apparitions, and witches. Not a school-boy now-a-days who does not laugh at the existence of witchcraft and sorcery; and, if he has ever heard of the statute-book, he silences every argument, by the quotation of the act of parliament which repealed the ancient laws by which those crimes were punishable, and thus expressed the sense of the legislature that no such crimes existed.

Yet it is certain, that many of the wisest and best-informed among our forefathers had a firm be-

lief in the existence of witchcraft and sorcery, and one of the most learned of our Monarchs actually wrote a treatise on the subject. To this some of the less amusing of our modern sceptics answer, that though, at the time of passing the old laws now repealed, and of writing that royal and learned treatise above-mentioned, such a diabolical heart and mystery might really and truly prevail; yet now, in the eighteenth century, it is no longer practised, and that witchcraft, conjuration, and sorcery, are entirely abolished and unknown.

I, for my part, have more reverence for the penetration of our forefathers, than to suppose they could have been deceived as to what happened in their own time; and further, I am not ashamed to confess my belief that even yet there exists such an art as that of witchcraft; nor do I despair of bringing over my readers to this opinion, if they will listen with candour to the proofs I propose in this paper to bring in support of it.

I conceive the fairest way of doing this to be, to cite, from the best authority among the old writers, the appearances they particularly remarked, and the facts they specifically set forth, of the practice of this unchristian and diabolical art in their time; and then to appeal to the experience and observation of every unprejudiced person, whether such appearances and facts are not at this day frequently and commonly seen and known. If this be allowed, it may, I think, fairly be presumed, that the same causes produce the same effects, that these extraordinary phænomena are now, as formerly, the effect of unnatural means, to wit, of witchraft, sorcery, or conjuration.

The treatise of King James I should certainly chuse as the highest authority on this subject, were it not from its dialogistic form, rather diffuse, and not easily compressible into the short limits of your

paper. I shall therefore extract, from another writer, a contemporary of that wise and learned monarch, a more brief account of the different sorts of witchcraft, which, however, is chiefly taken from, and in most particulars entirely agrees with the dialogues of the king on that subject.

'I think it good,' says the writer, 'in this place to set down the divers sorts and classes of those unlawful and accused dealers in witchcraft, conjuration, enchantment, and sorcery, on whom the late wise and wholesome law (*anno secundo, vulgo primo, Jacob. cap.* 12.) doth specially attach.

'1. There are who, moulding images of persons on whom they mean to practise, and making up the same to something of human similitude, with wax, paint, hair, and other materials, do stick into the same, scissars, long pins, and other piercing weapons, and at the last laying the same before a strong fire, as the wax of the image melteth away, so doth the flesh of the poor wight whom it representeth (which was at first tortured and torn as with the wounding of such sharp instruments as aforesaid) burn and consume with strange pains and pinings,

'2. Others there be, exceeding rife in Lapland, Finland, and other wild parts of the world, who at their nightly meetings, by incantations and uncouth form of words, calling the arch fiend to their aid, and being sometimes armed with charms and amulets of strange shape and divers colours, these withered and devilish hags do raise storms, tempests, and angry appearances of the sky, to the wreck of many goodly ships, and rich merchandise.

'3. A third kind is of those who being more stirred with the greed of lucre, than pricked on (as the two last mentioned sorts) with anger and revenge, do, by compact with the devil, procure to themselves much wealth in gold, silver, and precious

stones, which they in chests, caskets, and other places, into which no man could put the same by any natural means. But therein oft-times is manifest the notable deceit of the great father of lies, that the said gold and other precious things, shall, in a short space, be turned again into stones, dross or other unvalued substances, whereof Satan (as may be conjectured) did first by his power and art make and fashion the same.

'4. There is likewise to be noted a power which such wizards and sorcerers do possess, of transporting themselves invisibly, so that no man knoweth whence they came, nor whither they go, and of entering houses, though the same be barred against them in all manner of usual passage and access, disquieting and affraying the inhabitants thereof; though generally (as our Royal Master well observeth in his most learned Dialogue on Demonologie, book iii. chap. 1.), when those wizards or spirits (for their kind and species seemeth not well determined) haunt certain houses that are dwelt in, it is a sure token of grosse ignorance, or of some grosse and slanderous sinnes amongst the inhabitants thereof.'

Now, to bring examples to the various kinds of witchcraft similar to the above, which still continue to be practised in modern times. Is not Miss——, to whose health I have drank so many bumpers, plainly a witch of the first class? Does she not make up an image like a human one, with wax (otherwise pomatum) and paint (as is sometimes alledged), hair, and other materials, stick into the same *scissars*, *long pins*, and other piercing weapons, and which causeth those on whom she intends to practise, to burn and consume with strange pains and pinings? I must further observe here, that my author on this part of his subject, differs from his Royal Master on the

question, 'Whether it is lawful, by the help of another witch, to cure the disease that is casten on by the craft of the first?' which question the king had answered in the negative; but this latter writer argues for the lawfulness of that mode of cure. Our modern *bewitched* accordingly seem almost universally to agree in the latter opinion.

The nightly meetings of the older species of witch, mentioned by the above author in the second place have surely come within the knowledge of most of my readers. In the inner room of some very great ladies houses, on what is called (by a phrase probably borrowed from this very act of witchcraft) a *rout-night* are not certain magical sounds and incantations used? Is not the arch fiend frequently called on by name? Are there not, on a table, sometimes in a little caldron, amulets to be seen of strange shapes and divers colours? Are there not storms raised, and angry appearances? Undoubtedly all those circumstances are known to exist. That, however, no innocent person may suffer from my accusation, and that the Lord of any such great Lady may not, like the good Duke of Gloucester of old, suffer for the witchcraft of his wife, I must in justice add, that the husbands of these ladies are in general no conjurors.

Of the third kind of those unlawful dealers with the devil, there is no want of examples among us. Do we not see men every day, who by compact with the devil (for we know not of any natural means by which they could accomplish it), procure to themselves much wealth, gold, silver, and precious stones? Is not Mr. ——, who was a few years ago worth nothing, but who now keeps his chariot, entertains people of the first fashion, gives the most sumptuous entertainments, and drinks the highest priced wines; in short, vies in expence with men of the greatest

fortunes, evidently a conjurer of this class? As to the transmutation of this gold and other precious materials into their former state of dross, and other things of no value, I have the point of similitude to the evidence of those gentlemen's creditors.

As to the species described in the fourth section of the learned author above quoted, I see in most houses of fashionable resort wizards of a description resembling those who possess the power of invisible transportation mentioned by this writer; men whose descent nobody knows, of whom no one can tell whence they came, and who themselves confess their ignorance whither they shall go, who talk of intimacies with people of most distinguished rank, both at home and abroad, and give hints of having been in the most private recesses of palaces and hotels, who must undoubtedly have been carried thither by some supernatural power, and who, according to the testimony of people who are known to have been in some of those places at the time, must have actually been there in an invisible state. Is it not also commonly a token (as our author phrases it) " of grosse ignorance and slanderous sinne" in the inhabitants of the houses where such wizards or spirits do for the most part haunt? Do not many of them get into such houses though the doors are barred against them, and all manner of usual access is denied? And is not the cure of such a plague exactly the same in these days as in the time of King James, 'by prayer to God used in the house,' or 'by the inhabitants thereof purging themselves, by amendment of life, from such sinnes as have procured the extraordinary plague of these evil spirits haunting the same?'

I think I have now fully evinced the truth of the proposition with which I set out. I shall only add one other instance, of which I think, Sir, you are particularly qualified to attest the truth. An author

of a periodical paper who knows the minds of the ladies better than themselves; who reads characters as a physician reads diseases, by merely looking on the faces of his patients; who can prognosticate the change of manners, the rise of fashions, the downfal of wits, and the decay of beauties;—if such a man is not a conjuror, he is absolutely good for nothing.

I am, &c.

ANTIQUO-MODERNUS.

Z

N° 42. SATURDAY, NOV. 19, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR,

I WAS much pleased with the mention made by your friend Colonel Caustic, of our poet Hamilton, of Bangour. I have always regarded him as holding a distinguished rank among the fine writers of his age, and as having done signal credit to the genius of his country. Yet his works do not appear to me to be so well known, nor to be held in such high esteem, as they deserve. Permit me therefore to recommend them to your readers.

The poems of Hamilton display regular design, just sentiments, fanciful invention, pleasing sensibility, elegant diction, and smooth versification. His genius was aided by taste, and his taste was improved by knowledge. He was not only well acquainted with the most elegant modern writers, but with those of antiquity. Of these remarks, his poem entitled *Con-*

templation, or *The Triumph of Love*, affords sufficient illustration.

The design of this poem is regular. The Poet displays in it the struggles, relapses, recoveries, and final discomfiture of a mind striving with an obstinate and habitual passion. It has, in the language of the critics, a beginning, a middle, and an end. It exhibits an action in its rise, progress, and termination. The poet represents himself as wishing to withdraw his thoughts from inferior subjects, and fix them on such as he holds better suited to a rational, and still more to a philosophical spirit. He must be aided in this high exercise by Contemplation, and the assistance of this august personage must be duly solicited. Accordingly, the poem opens with a fine address to the 'Voice divine!' the Power of Poetry:

> Go forth, invoked, O Voice divine!
> And issue from thy sacred shrine;
> Go, search each solitude around
> Where Contemplation may be found, &c.

But Contemplation must not only be duly solicited, but properly received and attended; and therefore a company of various but suitable associates are invited;

> Bring Faith, endued with eagle eyes,
> That joins this earth to distant skies, &c.
> Devotion high above that soars,
> And sings exulting, and adores, &c.——
> Last, to crown all, with these be join'd
> The decent nun, fair Peace of Mind,
> Whom innocence, ere yet betrayed,
> Bore young in Eden's happy shade;
> Resign'd, contented, meek, and mild,
> Of blameless mother, blameless child.

In like manner, such passions as are adverse to Contemplation are very properly prohibited; and in this catalogue are included, among others, Superstition, Zeal, Hypocrisy, Malice, and all inhuman affections.

The poet seems chiefly solicitous to prohibit Love. Of him and his intrusion he appears particularly apprehensive. Yet in the confidence of his present mood, he would disguise his apprehensions, and treats this formidable adversary, not only with defiance, but with contempt.

> But chiefly Love, Love far off fly,
> Nor interrupt my privacy.
> 'Tis not for thee, capricious power,
> Week tyrant of a fev'rish hour,
> Fickle, and ever in extremes,
> My radiant day of reason beams;
> And sober contemplation's ear
> Disdains thy syren tongue to hear.
> Speed thee on changeful wings away
> To where thy willing slaves obey.
> Go herd amongst thy wonted train,
> The false, th' inconstant, and the vain;
> Thou hast no subject here; begone!
> Contemplation comes anon.

The action proceeds. The poet attends to solemn objects; engages in important inquiries; considers the diversified condition of human life; dwells on the ample provision made by nature for human happiness; dwells on the happiness of social affections; is thus led imperceptibly to think of love; mentions Monimia, and relapses.

> Ah me! What, helpless have I said?
> Unhappy, by myself betrayed!
> I deem'd, but ah! I deem'd in vain,
> From the dear image to refrain, &c.

He makes another effort, but with equal success; he makes another; and another; he will exalt his mind by acts of devotion, or plunge into the gloom of melancholy. But the influences of the predominant passion still return to the charge, and restore their object, on the heights of devotion, or in the shades of melancholy, he still meets with Monimia. Such

is the progress of the poem: and in the conclusion, we have an interesting view of the poet, yielding to his adversary, but striving to be resigned.

> Pass but some fleeting moments o'er,
> This rebel heart shall beat no more, &c.

The justness of the poet's sentiments is next to be mentioned. He illustrates the power of habituated passion over reason and reflection. Farther, he illustrates, that, though the attention be engaged with objects of the most opposite kind to that of the reigning passion, yet still it returns. He shews too, that this happens, notwithstanding the most determined resolutions and purposes to the contrary. All this he does not formally, but by ingenious and indirect insinuation. He also illustrates a curious process in the conduct of our intellectual powers, when under the dominion of strong emotion. He shews the manner by which prevailing passions influence our thoughts in the association of ideas: that they do not throw their objects upon the mind abruptly, or without coherence, but proceed by a regular progress: for that how different soever ideas or objects may be from one another, the prevailing or habituated passion renders the mind acute in discerning among them common qualities, or circumstances of agreement or correspondence, otherwise latent or not obvious: that these common qualities are dexterously used by the mind, as uniting links, or means of transition; and that thus, not incoherently, but by the natural connection most commonly of resemblance, the ruling passion brings its own objects to the fore ground, and into perfect view. Thus our Poet, in the progress of his action, has recourse to friendship. He dwells on the happiness that connection bestows; he wishes for a faithful friend; his imagination figures such a person,

In whose soft and gentle breast
His weary soul may take her rest;

and then, by easy transition, invests this friend with a female form, with the form of Monimia:

Grant Heaven, if Heaven means bliss for me,
Monimia such and long may be.

In like manner having recourse to devotion in a spirit of rational piety, he solicits the aid of Heaven to render him virtuous. He personifies Virtue; places her in a triumphal car, attended by a suitable train; one of her attendants, a female distinguished by high pre-eminence, must also be distinguished by superior beauty, must resemble the fairest of human beings, must resemble Monimia:

While chief in beauty, as in place,
She charms with dear Monimia's grace.
Monimia still, here once again!
O! fatal name; O dubious strain, &c.
Far off the glorious rapture flown,
Monimia rages here alone.
In vain, Love's fugitive I try
From the commanding power to fly, &c.—
Why didst thou, cruel Love again
Thus drag me back to earth and pain?
Well hop'd I, Love, thou would'st retire
Before the bless'd Jessean lyre,
Devotion's harp would charm to rest
The evil spirit in my breast.
But the deaf adder still disdains
To listen to the charmer's strains.

The whole poem illustrates the difficulty and necessity of governing our thoughts no less than our passions.

In enumerating the most remarkable qualities in Hamilton's poetical works, besides regularity of design, and justness of thought or sentiment, I mentioned fanciful invention; and of this particular I shall, in like manner, offer some illustration.

Fanciful invention is, in truth, the quality that, of all others, distinguishes, and is chiefly characteristic of poetical composition. The beauties of design, sentiment, and language, belong to every kind of fine writing: but invention alone creates the Poet, and is a term nearly of the same signification with poetical genius. A poet is said to have more or less genius according to his powers of fancy or invention. That Hamilton possesses a considerable portion of this talent, is manifest in many of his compositions, and particularly so in his *Contemplation*. This appears evident from some passages already quoted. But, though our poet possesses powers of invention, he is not endowed with all the powers of invention, nor with those of every kind. His genius seems qualified for describing more beautiful scenes and objects of external nature, and for delineating with the embellishments of allegory, some passions and affections of the human mind.

Still, however, his imagination is employed among beautiful and engaging, rather than among awful and magnificent images; and even when he presents us with dignified objects, he is more grave than lofty, more solemn than sublime, as in the following passage:

Now see! the spreading gates unfold,
Display'd the sacred leaves of gold.
Let me with holy awe repair
To the solemn house of pray'r;
And as I go, O thou! my heart,
Forget each low and earthly part.
Religion enter in my breast,
A mild and venerable guest!
Put off, in contemplation drown'd,
Each thought impute in holy ground;
And cautious tread, with awful fear,
The courts of heaven;—for God is here.
Now my grateful voice I raise,
Ye angels, swell a mortal's praise,
To charm with your own harmony
The ear of him who sits on high.

It was also said, that our poet possessed pleasing sensibility. It is not asserted that he displays those vehement tumults and ecstacies of passion, that belong to the higher kinds of lyric and dramatic composition. He is not shaken with excessive rage, nor melted with overwhelming sorrow; yet, when he treats of grave or affecting subjects, he expresses a plaintive and engaging softness. He is never violent and abrupt, and is more tender than pathetic. Perhaps the 'Braes of Yarrow,' one of the finest ballads ever written, may put in a claim to superior distinction. But even with this exception, I should think our Poet more remarkable for engaging tenderness, than for deep and affecting pathos. Of this his epitaph, beginning with 'Could this fair marble,' affords illustration.

In like manner, when he expresses joyful sentiments, or describes scenes and objects of festivity, which he does very often, he displays good humour and easy cheerfulness, rather than the transports of mirth or the brilliancy of wit. In one of the best of his poems addressed to Lady Mary Montgomery, he adorns sprightliness of thought, graceful ease, and good humour, with corresponding language and numbers. In this performance a number of female characters are described in the liveliest manner, characterised with judgment, and distinguished with acute discernment. Thus, in the following indirect description, we have the dignity of female excellence:

> ——Heavenly Charlotte, form divine,
> Love's universal kingdom's thine:
> Anointed Queen! all unconfin'd,
> Thine is the homage of mankind.

In another passage we have a fine picture of the gentler and livelier graces:

> In everlasting blushes seen,
> Such Pringle shines, of sprightly mien:

To her the power of love imparts,
Right gift! the soft successful arts,
That best the lover's fires provoke,
The lively step, the mirthful joke;
The speaking glance, the am'rous wile,
The sportful laugh, the winning smile;
Her soul awak'ning every grace,
Is all abroad upon her face;
In bloom of youth still to survive,
All charms are there, and all alive.

Elsewhere we have a melodious beauty:

Artist divine! to her belong,
The heavenly lay, and magic song, &c.—
Whene'er she speaks, the joy of all,
Soft the silver accents fall, &c.

The transitions in this poem are peculiarly happy. Such are the following:

Strike again the golden lyre,
Let Hume the notes of joy inspire, &c.—
But who is she, the general gaze
Of sighing crowds the world's amaze,
Who looks forth as the blushing morn,
On mountains of the east new born, &c.—
Fair is the lily, sweet the rose,
That in thy cheek, O Drummond, glows, &c.

I have dwelt so long, and I could not avoid it, on the preceding particulars, that I have not left myself room for illustrations of our Poet's language and versification. I observed, in general, that these were elegant and melodius; and so every reader of genuine taste will feel them. They are not, however, unexceptionable: and if in another letter I should give farther illustration of our author's poetical character, I shall hold myself bound, not only to mention some excellencies, but also some blemishes in his verse and diction.

I am, &c.

PHILOMUSOS.

I have given the above letter, which I received some time ago from an unknown correspondent, to my readers, from a belief that they will feel themselves interested in the Works of a Poet, who not only was born and resided in Scotland, but whose pencil was particularly employed in delineating the eminent characters of both sexes in our native country at the time in which he lived. It will not, methinks, require the enthusiasm of a '*laudator temporis acti*,' like Colonel Caustic, to receive a peculiar satisfaction in tracing the virtues and the beauty of a former age, in the verses of one who appears to have so warmly caught the spirit of the first, to have so warmly felt the power of the latter. Nor may it be altogether without a moral use, to see in the poetical record of a former period, the manners of our own country in times of less luxury, but not perhaps of less refinement; when Fashion seems to have conferred superiorities fully as intrinsic as any she can boast at present: to have added dignity of sentiment to pride of birth, and to have invested superior beauty with superior grace and high accomplishments.

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N° 43. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 1785.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR, ——*shire, Oct.* 1785.

AT the age of thirty-five I succeeded, by the death of a near relation, to a considerable land estate. Upon this event I resolved to fix my residence at the family mansion-house. I was very little acquainted with that part of the country where it was situated; but I was told it was an uncommonly *good neighbourhood;* and that I should be particularly fortunate in having it in my power to enjoy an excellent society. I found a tolerable library of old books, to which I added a pretty extensive collection of modern ones: from the perusal of them, from the attention which I proposed to give to the culture of a part of my estate which I meant to farm myself, and from the enjoyment which I expected to reap from the company and conversation of my good neighbours, I was in hopes that my life would slide on in a very agreeable manner.

Being naturally of an easy temper, and desirous of being on good terms with every one around me, as soon as I came to fix my abode, I made it a principal object to get acquainted with my neighbours, and to establish a familiar intercourse between us. Our first visits were rather formal and distant; but this gradually wore off, and our correspondence became frequent and repeated. Their invitations to me were numerous; and I did not fail to ask them in return. I endeavoured to make my welcome as

warm as theirs, and to treat them with the same marks of hospitality which I received.

But, Sir, I now find that what I expected would have been one of the blessings of my situation, has become one of its greatest misfortunes. My neighbours, having once found the way to my house, are now scarce ever out of it. When they are idle in the mornings, which is almost always the case, they direct their ride or their walk my way, and pay a friendly visit to their neighbour Dalton. I am by this means interrupted in my attention to my farm, and have not time left to give the necessary orders. It is vain to think of making use of my library: when I sit down to read, I am disturbed before I get the length of a few pages, and am obliged to break off in the midst of an interesting story, or an instructive piece of reasoning. I cannot deny myself, or order my servants to tell I am not at home. This is one of your privileges in town: but in the country, if one's horses are in the stable, or one's chaise in the coach-house, one is of necessity bound to receive all intruders. In this manner are my mornings constantly lost, and I am not allowed to have a single half hour to myself.

This, however, is one of the slightest of my distresses; the morning intrusions are nothing to the more formal visitations of the afternoons. Hardly a day passes without my being obliged to have a great dinner for the reception of my neighbours: and when they are not with me, good neighbourhood, I am told, requires I should be with them, and give them my visitations in return. Even of the very best company, where the very best conversation takes place, a man is apt, at least I have felt this in myself, sometimes to tire, and to wish for the indulgence of that listlessness, that sort of dreaming indolence, which you, Sir, are so well acquainted

with, and which can only be had alone. But to be constantly exposed to be in a crowd, a crowd selected from no other circumstance than from their residing within ten miles of you;—the keeper of an inn is not, in point of company, in a worse situation.

But the merely being obliged to spend my mornings in the way I have described, and my afternoons in a constant crowd of promiscuous company, is not the only evil I have to complain of. The manner in which I am obliged to spend it in that company is still more disagreeable. Hospitality in this part of the country does not consist solely in keeping an open house, and receiving all your neighbours for many miles round; but one must fill them drunk, and get drunk with them one's self. Having no fund of conversation with which they can entertain their landlord or each other, they are obliged to have recourse to their glass to make up for every other want, and deficiency of matter is supplied by repeated bumpers. It is a favourite maxim here, that *Conversation spoils good company:* and this maxim is most invariably followed in practice, unless noise and vociferation, after the swallowing of more than one bottle, can be called conversation. Without injustice it may be said of most of my neighbours, that when sober they are silent, and when not sober, it were better they remained silent. I have frequently made efforts to check the riot and intemperance of my guests, and to with-hold the bottle from them, when I have thought they have drank fully as much as was good for them; but I have always found myself unable to do it. I should hate to be called a stingy fellow; and I know, if I were to establish sobriety, I should be called stingy. When I cannot keep my guest sober, I sometimes try to escape the glass, and to be sober myself: but, when I do this, I find some of them look upon me with an evil eye,

as if I meant to be a spy upon the unguarded moments of my guests—others laugh at me for giving myself airs, as they call it; and I cannot bear to be laughed at.

But riot and drunkenness are not all the ills I have to submit to. After we have drunk oceans of liquor, cards are commonly proposed; and gambling and drunkenness, though very unfit companions, are joined together. We do not play for a very deep stake, but still we play for something considerable. I do not like to lose, and yet it is equally disagreeable to win. I am commonly pretty lucky; and, in a run of luck, often suffer a good deal in gaining their guineas from people who I know well cannot afford to lose them. It is a mortifying spectacle, to see those who are frequently together, and seem to be the greatest friends when the bottle is going round, after they have drunk as much as they can hold, sit down to pilfer one another of sums which they cannot easily pay, and which, in their sober moments, they will feel the distress of paying.

Sometimes to avoid play, I counterfeit sleepiness, and escape to bed. But this does not break up the party;—they are only left more at their liberty; and the morning is far advanced before matters are brought to a conclusion. The evil consequences of this to my domestic œconomy are obvious. My family is disturbed with noise during the whole night, and my servants are prevented from going to bed. My house is thus rendered a scene of confusion, and every household concern is neglected. I wish to get up betimes in the morning, and to have breakfast at an early hour: but this cannot be accomplished; for when I ring for John to bring up the tea-kettle, I am told he has not been above an hour in bed.

The corruption of the higher orders of the family I find is spreading among the lower. Going into

the servants' hall one night at a late hour, when I had escaped from the gambling party in the drawing-room, I found the whole servants engaged at *brag*. I could hardly be angry at them; they were only doing on a smaller scale what was a-doing on a larger above stairs; and being forced to sit up all night, they were obliged to fill up their time with something.

I have thus, Sir, laid before you some of the distresses of my situation, all of which seem to proceed from my having a good neighbourhood. I have frequently resolved to exert myself manfully to put a stop to these grievances, to quarrel with all my neighbours, and to tell them, that for the future I am to lock up my doors, and neither to give nor receive their visits. But my resolution has hitherto failed me. One of the comforts I expected to have received from living in the country, was, that I might live undisturbed; that the easiness of my temper should not be broke in upon; and that I should have no occasion for vigorous exertion. Desirous of being on a good footing with every body, and unable to bear either the censure or the derision of others, I have not been able, nor do I believe I ever shall be able to summon up as much resolution as to expose myself to the scorn or to the hatred of those around me.

In this situation it has occurred to me, that if you think proper to publish this letter, it may possibly, without my taking any stronger measure, have a good effect; it may perhaps afford a hint to my neighbours, which may relieve me in some measure, without any further stir of mine. But if this shall not happen, and if my grievances shall still continue, I find I shall be obliged, however unwillingly, to give up my habitation in the country, and to take a house in town, in order that I may sometimes enjoy

the pleasures of solitude and retirement, and escape the evils of a *good neighbourhood*. I am, &c.

GEORGE DALTON.

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N° 44. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, 1785.

To the LOUNGER.

SIR,

I HAVE observed, that the greatest part of your correspondents have given a detail of grievances and complaints. In disclosing their misfortunes, they have no doubt conveyed to your readers some useful lessons, for avoiding those errors of conduct which in general have been the cause of them: but the picture of happiness may often prove as instructive as that of calamity or distress; and, in that view, while I gratify my own feelings by the following narrative, I flatter myself it may not be unprofitable to others.

My father, Sir, inherited an estate in one of the northern counties of this kingdom, a property once considerable, and which had been in his family for some generations; but which, during his life and that of my grandfather, had, from a certain easiness of temper, bordering upon improvidence, and their humane endeavours to assist their needy relations, been so greatly reduced, that at my father's death it was necessary to bring the estate to sale for the payment of his debts. A trifling reversion remained for the support of my mother, myself, and an only sister; and with this slender provision we betook

ourselves to a small farm-house, which my mother rented from the new possessor of our paternal lands.

Here, by her uncommon industry, and the exertions of a spirit superior to her misfortunes, she maintained her little household decently and respectably, while she gained the esteem and admiration of the whole neighbourhood. My sister, who was some years younger than myself, was accustomed almost from infancy to bear her part in the management of the family. My mother had taught us reading, writing, and the first rudiments of arithmetic; and the clergyman of the parish was at pains to instruct me in the elements of the Greek and Latin languages, of which in a few years, I obtained a competent knowledge. This worthy man, whose name was Johnson, had been the friend and companion of my father from their earliest infancy, and thus considered himself as bound by duty to be a guardian and parent to his children. He had himself an only daughter, of equal age with my sister, and whom, in those days of childhood and innocence, I regarded alike with the affection of a brother. But on this first period of my life, though the recollection is delightful, I forbear to enlarge.

I had now attained my fifteenth year, and it became necessary to think of some profession by which I might make my way in the world. My inclination led me to the study of medicine, which I had prosecuted for some time with great assiduity, when a near relation of my mother's, who warmly interested himself in our welfare, procured for me the commission of a surgeon's mate on board an Indiaman. The ship to which I belonged was to sail within a fortnight after I received intelligence of my appointment. My mother prepared for me a stock of linens, and other necessaries, to which she added a purse with fiteen guineas. The worthy Mr. John-

son gave me a pocket-bible, with his blessing. My sister, and his daughter Emma, gave me their tears: for that was all they had to bestow: but from the tears of the latter I felt an emotion of tenderness beyond what even the affection of a brother could produce. I had unconsciously nourished an attachment of which this parting first taught me the force, but which, at the same time, it obliged me to stifle and conceal.

After a voyage of six months, our ship arrived in the Ganges. During my stay at Calcutta, I was fortunate enough to recommend myself to a countryman of my own, then high in the council; by whose interest, with my Captain's leave, I obtained an appointment of surgeon to a small settlement of the Company's, which bordered on the territory of the Nabob of ——. Various, Sir, are the methods of acquiring wealth in India. Of these the obvious and apparent are so well known, that they need not be mentioned; the more mysterious courses to affluence, as I never was solicitous myself to unravel, so I am not well qualified to explain. It is enough for me to say, that, with a good conscience, and during a twelve years exercise of a profession serviceable to my fellow-creatures, I acquired what to me appeared a competency. In short, Sir, being now possessed of a fortune of 25,000*l*. I began to think of returning to my native country. I had, from time to time, during the last years of my stay in India, remitted such sums to my mother as I judged might enable her to exchange her toilsome and parsimonious mode of life for ease and comfort; but she wrote to me, that industry was now become familiar, and even agreeable, that she could not relish the bread of idleness, and that it was sufficient happiness for her and for my sister to be assured of my health and prosperity. By the last opportunity that pre-

ceded my leaving India I had acquainted my mother of my intention of returning home in the following spring. This intention I put in execution; and bringing with me the best part of my fortune, landed in safety on the coast of Britain, after an absence of thirteen years and a half.

A few days travelling brought me once more to the spot of my nativity. I stopped in the afternoon within a few miles of the place, and wrote the following billet:

'Jack Truman sends the bearer, his servant, to acquaint his dearest mother and sister, that he is within a day's journey of Brookland farm, and proposes, by God's blessing, to be with them this evening.

This note was meant to give them time to prepare for our meeting; but I had not patience to wait my man's return, and set out a few minutes after him. I need not describe the emotion I felt at sight of my native fields, the recollection of which, distance of place and length of time had rather endeared than impaired. I had little leisure to indulge the remembrance: my mother and sister, equally impatient with myself, had come out to watch the road by which I was to arrive. Our meeting was such as might be expected from affection, heightened by the anxieties of absence; our joy such as prosperity can give to those to whom prosperity has not always been known, to those whom prosperity enables to make others happy.

You will easily figure, Sir, those topics, which, after so long an absence would naturally be the subject of our conversation. One of the first enjuiries I made was about the worthy Mr. Johnson and his amiable daughter. My mother informed me that this good man was then in the last stage of a painful disease under which he had languished above three

years, and which his constitution could not thus long have resisted but for the tender care and dutiful attention of his daughter Emma; that this affectionate child had, as was thought from that motive alone, rejected several advantageous offers of marriage. To this my sister added that she was one of the loveliest and most accomplished of women.

On my way to the farm, I had remarked the ruinous appearance of the mansion-house, which had been the seat of my forefathers. My mother informed me, that the gentleman who purchased the estate from our family had been some years dead; and that his son, by a course of extravagance, had so embarrassed his fortune, that it was thought he would soon be obliged to sell the greatest part of his landed property. An opportunity thus presenting itself of recovering my paternal estate, I determined to offer immediately to become the purchaser, and flattered myself with the prospect (I hope it was an honest pride) of re-establishing our ancient family in the domain of their ancestors.

The first visit I paid to Mr. Johnson led me to form schemes of a nature yet more delightful to my imagination. Long absence, and the bustle of an active life, had lulled a sleep without extinguishing that affection with which his lovely daughter had inspired me in my early years. The sight of the beautiful Emma revived that passion in its utmost force, and convinced me that she was the arbitress of my future happiness or misery. I thought I perceived in the tender confusion, the diffidence and modesty of her demeanor, and in the simplicity of a heart untaught to disguise its emotions, that I was far from being indifferent to her; nor was I deceived in this flattering idea. Her father's dissolution was fast approaching. He survived my return but a

few months; and the last act of his public duty was the union of our hands.

Five years have elapsed since that event; and I hope, Sir, you will not think my narrative tedious, if I give a short sketch of the manner in which I have passed that happy period.

The transaction for the purchase of our estate was attended with very little difficulty; and the restoration of the family to its antient territories was celebrated by all the tenants and cottagers with high festivity, and every mark of heart-felt satisfaction. I began immediately to repair the desolated mansion-house; and having myself some taste in architecture, contrived to render it a most commodious habitation, without injuring the antiquity of its appearance, which I venerated. The apartments were repaired in the modern fashion; and the elegance of my Emma's taste displayed itself in their furniture and decorations. In a few particulars I indulged perhaps a little caprice. The wide-extended chimney of the hall, which its late proprietor had contracted to the modern scale, and decorated with Dutch porcelain, I enlarged once more to its original dimensions. It was a venerable monument of ancient hospitality. My grandfather's oaken chair was found mouldering in a garret. It was restored to its place. The top of a square tower I fitted up into a library, lighted by a large gothic window with leaden casements, from whence by day I command a beautiful landscape of the country, and by night can explore the heavens by my telescope; and here in my favourite studies of philosophy, general physics, and classical literature, of which I have a pretty numerous collection of the best authors, I pass many delightful hours. In another part of the building I have a small laboratory for chymical ex-

periments, and the composition of medicines. Those researches to which I was formerly led by my profession, still furnish me with an amusing, and even an useful employment; for while Providence blesses me with health, I will always be the poor man's physician.

As I am rather unwilling to occupy myself with practical husbandry, a science which without a peculiar bent and inclination I have always thought was not rashly to be engaged in, I limit my rustic employments to planting and gardening. The fields which surround my house owe their principal beauties to nature. The upland and barren spots I have covered with wood, which in a few years will afford both beauty and shelter. Assisted by my Emma's judgment, I have laid out a large garden, which promises soon to furnish me with a profusion of the most elegant fruits. A fine trouting stream washes its border. My hills pasture my mutton, and supply my game; of which the first is excellent, and the last is plentiful.

Soon after our establishment at the mansion-house, my mother and sister quitted their habitation, and became members of our family. The farm, which had become a very profitable subject, has been transferred to an old domestic who had remained attached to the family in all the changes of its fortune, and who merited that reward of his services and fidelity. My mother, whose active mind would languish if deprived of an object of exertion, has now found another occupation not less suited to her taste, and yet more pleasing in its nature. My Emma has brought me three children; two charming girls, and a stout healthy boy. These she has suckled herself, a part of the duty of a mother which she finds too agreeable to be relinquished to a hireling. The two eldest are now in charge to their grandmother, who has undertaken for them

the same office she performed to myself; and in this the good woman flatters herself with a renewal of her years. My sister was wont for some time to share in the same occupation; but I don't know how, her disposition seems a good deal changed of late. Instead of her work, she has taken to reading poetry; and borrows a good deal of time from her cares of the dairy, to bestow it on her books and her toilet. It is true, my neighbour Harty's son Tom is a scholar, and when he comes here with his family (and they are very frequent visitors of ours), my sister and he seem very solicitous to please each other; a circumstance I am not all sorry to observe. Tom is a very worthy young man, and my sister an excellent girl: she has one quality to which Tom is a stranger; I have taken care that she shall be entitled to 1500l. on the day of her marriage.

Such, Mr. Lounger, is my manner of life; and as I perceive from some of your late papers, that you can contrive to pass a few weeks in the country, without discontinuing to amuse the town, if you will do me the honour of a visit, I promise you the best bed in my house, a bottle of my best wine, and the best welcome I can give. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

JOHN TRUMAN.

I feel myself honoured by my friend Mr. Truman's correspondence, and sensibly interested in the simple story of his worthy family. His example may serve to inculcate one lesson of importance; That moderation in point of wealth, is productive of the greatest comfort and the purest felicity. Had Mr. Truman returned from India with the enormous fortune of some other Asiatic adventurers, he would probably have been much less happy than he

is, even without considering the means by which it is possible such a fortune might have been acquired. In the possession of such overgrown wealth, however attained, there is generally more ostentation than pleasure; more pride than enjoyment: I can but guess at the feelings which accompany it, when reaped from desolated provinces, when covered with the blood of slaughtered myriads.

Z

N° 45. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10, 1785.

To the Author of the Lounger.

SIR,

Perhaps it is vanity in me to suppose that you have been expecting to hear from me, and it is possible, from my first account of myself, may have supposed that there were very melancholy reasons for my silence. But I am, Sir, thank God! returned to my native country in no worse condition with respect to health, than when I left it. As to peace and happiness, I can't say; my wife thinks her health much the better for our expedition.

Perhaps, Sir, I may in time learn to be reconciled to noise and disturbance, and forget my old habits of quiet and care of my health, which my dear deceased friend Dr. Doddipoll had taught me. And yet I do not find that my journey has reconciled me much to the change, though I have had some practice in the way of bustle and adventure, as you will find from a short account of our excursion.

As the motive of our journey was professedly the re-establishment of my health, I had reason to imagine that it would be conducted in the manner best suited for that purpose. I had made out a little *Pharmacopeia* of things necessary to be taken along with us on the road; but would you believe it, Sir, our new family-physician declared them altogether unnecessary, and our whole medicine chest was made up of one phial, containing two drachms of spirit of hartshorn, and a bottle holding about as many pounds of French brandy. But my wife found room in the carriage for her favourite maid, her Spanish lap-dog, and three band-boxes. Her monkey, who arrived just before we set out, she was with difficulty prevailed on to leave behind under the care of the housekeeper; an acquaintance, indeed, who met us a few miles out of town on the road to England, rode up to my wife's side of the carriage, said he supposed Mr. Dy-soon was following, and pointing to the corner where I was stuck up among the bandboxes, told her he was glad to find she had taken little master Jackoo along with her.

Though Harrowgate was the place of our destination, yet my wife (who was general of this expedition) thought it might be proper to stop at one of the more private watering places in Cumberland, to initiate us as it were into that sort of life; as young recruits, I am told, are taught to stand their own fire by first flashing their muskets in the pan. We accordingly made a halt at one of those places, with the intention of staying some weeks; but we were very soon tired of it, as the society was by no means genteel enough for my wife to mix in with any degree of satisfaction.

The only people she would allow us to consort with were the family of Sir David Dumplin, a London merchant, who had been knighted for his

eminence in commerce, who had arrived a few days before us with his Lady and three daughters, and a Captain in the army, who had come thither to recover the fatigues he had suffered during the siege of Gibralter, and whom Mrs. Dy-soon took great delight in hearing recount his adventures. We amused ourselves during our stay by making the other members of the party ridiculous, though they did not want for jokes against us too. They called me and my wife 'Death and Sin;' the first I could understand from my feebleness and bad health; but how they applied the second, neither the Captain nor I could ever comprehend;—they had several jests equally low and unjust against the family of Sir David Dumplin, who they pretended was only a sugar-boiler in Wapping, and had been knighted on occasion of some city address. Sir David himself, to do him justice, behaved in a very civil manner to every body, and, except sometimes when he snored after dinner, never gave the smallest offence to the rest of the company; and as for me, I was always, both in mind and body, inclined to peace and quietness. But Lady Dumplin and her daughters, with my Angelica and the Captain, were constantly at war with the other end of the table, which was divided into two hostile and irreconcileable provinces. Their differences might, indeed, have proceeded very disagreeable lengths, had we not contrived to erect a sort of barrier against hostilities, by placing between them Sir David Dumplin on one side, and a Mrs. Dough, wife of a rich baker of Liverpool, on the other, who was naturally of as placid a disposition as Sir David, and had the advantage of being deaf into the bargain. By this politic interposition, the peace was tolerably well preserved; but as the opposite party, the *ungenteels* increased daily by new arrivals, and ours, the *genteels*,

got no accession that we were disposed to allow of, the place became at last so disagreeable, and the laugh so much louder against than for us, that we were obliged to leave it a good deal sooner than we intended, and set off for Harrowgate, in company with our allies, the Dumplin family. The Captain found it convenient to remain, having previously deserted from us, on some difference with one of the young ladies, and made his peace with the opposite side, through the mediation of the good-natured Mrs. Dough, with whom (from being used to speak at the siege of Gibraltar I suppose) he contrived frequently to carry on a conversation.

To Harrowgate our gentility attended us; but it was a little unfortunate in not being universally acknowledged. There was some London people of fashion there, who had seen Sir D. Dumplin before, and such as had never seen us did not immediately perceive in Mrs. Dy-soon's face and manner that she had so much good blood in her veins as did actually flow there. This, however, as she was perfectly conscious of it herself, produced numberless bickerings, and at last obliged us to leave the first house we had lodged at, where I had got an excellent quiet apartment, and go to another, where we were much worse accommodated, but where Lady Dumplin and the Hon. Mrs. Dy-soon were the first quality of the set. Here she very fortunately supplied the loss of our Gibraltar Captain, by getting acquainted with an Irish gentleman, Colonel O'Shannon, a relation of ours, our ancestors, as the Colonel and Mrs. Dy-son discovered, having intermarried about the year 1300. The Colonel still preserved the kindness of a cousin, attended my wife whereever she went, and made us immediately intimate with all the company in the house. But the kindness had very near proved fatal to me. Between

the bustle of his numerous introductions, the parties he formed for us at home, and the jaunts he made us take to see every thing that was to be seen in the neighbourhood, my poor nerves were perfectly overcome; and though my wife was always telling me it was all for my good, I should have certainly died in their hands, had they not at last discovered, that my wife's seeing the sights and taking the exercise would be as much for the benefit of my health, as if I drove about and visited every thing in my own person; and so I verily believe it might, Mr. Lounger, had I been fortunate enough to be left to enjoy quiet, and take care of my health alone. But as my ill stars would have it, I was generally left to the care of a lady, with whom, from her having the same sort of nervous complaints with myself, I had contracted an intimacy, the dowager of an old gentleman, who had, like me, married his wife for a nurse, and who left her after a life of happiness (as she used to tell me) of 18 months, in possession of his whole fortune. But then her nerves, she said, had been so shattered by his death, that she could find no enjoyment in any thing in this world. The disorder in her nerves, however, was of a kind extremely different from mine. None of that weakness and relaxation which I had experienced from a child; her's, the physicians said, was an extreme tension and irritability. She kept, it seems, a female attendant, who was of the greatest use to her in this complaint: but that attendant had died just before her arrival at Harrowgate, and in this unfortunate interval my acquaintance with her began: so she bestowed all her tension and irritability on me. It makes me quake when I think of her, Mr. Lounger! and yet, though you will call it very silly I could not for the life of me shake her off. She, had become, I don't know how, a sort of Cicisbea to

me by the common consent of our house, and I could not get rid of her without a degree of exertion that my weak constitution was unequal to. But her constitution, as she told us, was always the better for exertion. She exerted it on me with a vengeance. I often thought of the smile of the vulgar people we had left at our last watering-place. Mrs. Rasp would have completed Milton's trio to a hair.

I was very thankful when the end of the season made me rid of her, though it did not restore me to home or to quiet. Mrs. Dy-soon, on looking over the road-book, perceived what a mere step it was from Harrowgate to London, and calculated how much expence was saved by going to the metropolis now when we were more than half of the way from Edinburgh. In this idea she was much encouraged by her cousin, Col. O'Shannon, as well as by Lady Dumplin, and half a dozen other ladies who had come from the capital, at whose houses she was to be most agreeably entertained if she went thither. It was in vain that I urged my health, and the danger of a long journey; the journey would do me good, and London was 200 miles south, which gave it a great advantage, in point of climate, to delicate people like me. So out we set the day after our friends the Dumplins who were to travel faster (as indeed I am not able to make long journies), and kindly undertook to procure lodgings, and have them ready for our reception.

But their services in that way were anticipated by our good friend Colonel O'Shannon, who travelled faster than any of us, as he generally makes his journies in the stage-coach for the sake of company, and sometimes even takes a stage or two on the outside to enjoy the air and the prospect. We found on our arrival that he had provided us with a lodging

in the house of country woman of his, a milliner in the Hay-market, who, he told us, had been reduced by misfortunes to keep a shop, though she was descended from the great O'Neil, and could claim kindred with himself and most of the noble families in Europe. She was very useful to my wife in letting her know the fashions; and with her assistance, Mrs. Dy-soon contrived to fill I don't know how many band-boxes and trunks, which however, luckily for me grew to such a magnitude, as to require half a ship's room to convey them; and so they were sent down to Scotland by sea. As for the Colonel, he was indefatigable in his attentions, and breakfasted, dined, and supped with us almost every day. Indeed, we were the more dependant on his company, as we were disappointed in getting into any other during our five or six weeks stay in town. We never could find any of our Harrowgate acquaintance at home; even the Dumplin family we saw but for two short morning calls at our lodgings; Sir David, indeed, muttered something about our eating a bit of mutton with him; but Lady Dumplin said she was sorry to say that that would be very *ill-convenient* at their present house, which they were just about changing for one in Beford-square, where she hoped for the honour of our company at her first rout, which was to be held the 5th of Jan. next. They told us the town was quite empty at the season when we were there; but I am sure there was noise and bustle enough of all conscience; carts rumbling, coaches rattling, criers bawling, and bells ringing, from morning to night, and sometimes, as my poor head felt, all night too. My wife, however, luckily found it very dull, otherwise we should not probably have left it so soon as we did, though not before it had cost us some hundreds of guineas to find out that there was nothing in it worth seeing.

Colonel O'Shannon carried us to some sights, such as they were; he shewed us the tower, St. Paul's, Bedlam, and the three Bridges; took us to the city Pantheon, the Dog and Duck, and the Swearing-house at Highgate. As for genteel company, he regretted exceedingly that almost all his acquaintance were in the country; but promised that when we came again he would introduce us to a Director of the Bank, a Lord of the Treasury, and the Master-general of the Ordnance, which last, he assured us, had a very particular friendship for him; but, in his absence, he made us acquainted with a young gentleman, who, he said, was one of that great man's first favourites, and a secretary in his office; an appointment which the Colonel had procured for him. My wife was very solicitous to cultivate Mr. M'Phelim's acquaintance, on account of two nephews of her's who are in the army, to whom the Colonel and he have promised their interest; and we have the greater reason to rely on their friendship, as the Colonel and his friend did us the honour of accepting a loan of £200 from me (which Mr. M'Phelim wanted to make up a sum in the absence of the Master-general of the Ordnance) on their joint security.

Not long after this transaction we left London, and I found it some comfort, after all my distresses and disturbances, to find myself again safe and sound in my native country. Not that I am free of the disquiet of my journey; it rings in my ears still in the narration of my wife, who has such talents for description, that if I had not witnessed the circumstances, I should have supposed Sir D. Dumplin to be a Knight of the Garter, Colonel O'Shannon a Lieutenant-general, and his friend Mr. M'Phelim a Privy-counsellor. She makes all our acquaintance take notice how much better I am for Harrowgate,

though, in fact, I never drank a drop of the water and, except the company of Mrs. Rasp, took no sort of drug whatever. I must confess, however, that I am no worse on the whole, and am not near so much afraid of dying as before I was married. I am, &c.

JEREMIAH DY-SOON.

J

N° 46. SATURDAY, DECEMBER, 17, 1785.

My Readers may have observed that the office of the Lounger has of late been almost a sinecure, his correspondents have saved him the trouble of composition. The paper of to-day is also a communication, which, from the sex and accomplishments of the author, as well as the flattering manner in which she expresses herself, gratifies my vanity, as much as my indolence.

To the Author of the Lounger.

SIR,

The genteel but pointed irony with which you mention the follies of our sex, and the pains you take, in your admired Essays for our instruction and improvement, will, I make no doubt, have some influence on the minds of those who are thoughtless, but not dissipated; and who, though hurried down the

stream of pleasure, are not yet enough hardened to disregard the admonitions of virtue.

Among young people of this description, many ladies may be led to the attainment of mental accomplishments, in hopes of recommending themselves to the notice of the other sex; who, from their superior education and more solid judgment, would, one might presume, be more guided by the dictates of good sense, than led by the blind caprices of Fashion. But methinks, Sir, it would not be altogether fair to mislead your inexperienced female readers with such fallacious hopes. Tell them as much as you please of the internal rewards that belong to virtue: that to embellish, in early life, their minds with taste, and to enlighten the understandings with some degree of knowledge, will prove to them an inexhaustible source of delight in the lonely hours of solitude, and procure veneration and respect to their declining years. But let them know, that, on the fine fellows who, in our days, deign to mingle in the female world, such accomplishments will have as much influence, as the harmonious compositions of Handel on the deaf pupils of Mr. Braidwood.

To be distinguished by your sex, is more or less the wish of every female heart. To solicit that distinction, Fancy is put to the torture to dress out the votaries of Fashion; and to deserve it, the more judicious endeavour to adorn their minds with knowledge, taste and sentiment. Which of these most frequently attain their end, you, Sir, who frequent the circle of the great and gay, can be at no loss to determine.

As I was early taught to mark the character, and make reflections on the events that passed before me in life, short as that life has been, and few and simple as have been its tranquil scenes, perhaps a sketch of it may not be altogether unworthy your perusal.

I am the daughter of a clergyman, whose virtues adorn humanity, and whose character in every respect, does honour to his profession. A long attachment had subsisted between him and my mother, before the pride of her relations (who piqued themselves on their high descent) would consent to her being made happy for ever by an union with one whom those relations considered as her inferior: but the constancy of their affection at length subdued every obstacle; and their life has ever since been one continued scene of domestic felicity. As I was their only child, my education was the prime object of their attention. To procure me the more elegant accomplishments, they appropriated the savings of their œconomy; while, with the tenderest solicitude, they themselves endeavoured to form my manners, to cultivate my understanding, and to cherish the virtues of my heart.

The friendly terms on which we lived with the patron of our parish, whose lady took a particular liking to me, gave me frequent opportunities of mixing with polite company. The natural gaiety of my temper, and steady sincerity of my heart, gained me the good will of all my companions; with some of whom I early contracted the most tender friendship, —a friendship which has increased with our increasing years, and received strength from every incident of pain or pleasure that has befallen us in life.

By the gentlemen, I found myself almost invariably treated according to their ideas of my rank and consequence. Of all the numbers who came to Castle—— excepting an old naval officer, many traits of whose character, though cast in somewhat of a rougher mould, bore a strong resemblance to that of your worthy friend Colonel Caustic, I do not remember to have met with one who thought it possible the daughter of a country parson could be as well informed

upon any subject as the heiress of a Baronet; and after I have, by Lady ——'s desire, played on her forte piano, some of the finest concertos of Bach and Abel to an unlistening audience, I have heard the same gentlemen applaud, with every mark of rapture the fashionable Miss Fanny Flirter rattling over some insipid fragment of a new opera tune.

At the earnest solicitation of a sister of my father's married to a respectable merchant in the capital, I one winter spent a few months with her in town. I had here a more ample opportunity of observing that universal passion, for what is called *style* in life, than I had hitherto met with. The notice taken of me by our patroness Lady ———, who always passed the winter in the metropolis, and to whose parties, either at home or at public places, I had a general invitation, made me esteemed quite the *ton* by the set of men who visited my uncle. I was often distressed by their civilities, and put out of countenance by their eagerness to shew me attention; while by the gentlemen in her Ladyship's suite I was considered of no more importance than any other piece of furniture in the drawing-room: but, like yourself, Sir, though silent, I was not always idle; and, while unthought of, and unspoke to, made such remarks on the scene before me, as I hope will be of service to me through life.

From Edinburgh, at the request of my mother's relations, I went to the county of ——. These great relations had taken no notice of her since her marriage, but now received me in the most cordial manner. I was immediately introduced by them to their acquaintances in a genteel and populous neighbourhood, and was every where received with the respect due to the ally, and, what is more, the very probable heiress of an ancient and wealthy family. Wherever I appeared, I was loaded with caresses

A gentleman of the first distinction engaged me for his partner at an election ball, which happened soon after my arrival in the country: and the attention paid me by him, and a few others of equal rank, soon brought me completely into fashion. I was now discovered to possess qualifications which no one before had ever thought of imputing to me. My former friends had indeed sometimes complimented me with the appellation of a lively sensible enough sort of girl; but now, to all the charms of elegance in manner, I added those of the most brilliant wit; and though it was allowed I could not, strictly speaking, be termed handsome, yet my features spoke such animation, and my eyes beamed with so much sensibility, that beauty herself would have had but little chance beside me. Was it any wonder, that every latent spark of vanity in my heart should have been kindled, on thus finding myself a distinguished figure in a scene of higher life than any I had yet witnessed? I was, alas! but too soon intoxicated with the adulation I received; and with the most poignant regret I took leave of people, who I thought had discovered such just discernment of merit, although it was to return to the fond arms of my beloved parents.

The flattering scenes I had left had made too deep impression to be easily erased. I found the amusements of my former life had become insipid, its employments irksome, and fatiguing; and as our great neighbours were now in London, I had little opportunity of diverting my chagrin by any change of company. It was even with difficulty I was prevailed on to accompany my most intimate friend to the county-assembly, as I knew I should there find myself in a very different situation to that in which I figured at the balls in ——. But what was my delight, on soon seeing enter the assembly room, along

with a family of the first rank, two of my most intimate acquaintance in that loved county! As both the gentlemen had *there* honoured me with their particular attention, my heart beat with rapture at the idea of what delight they must receive from this unexpected interview. But I soon found these gentlemen wisely considered that I now moved in a different sphere. They avoided seeming to observe me as long as possible: and when at length obliged to do it, passed their compliments with a certain careless air, which may not improperly be styled a well-bred sort of incivility. A moment's reflection on this little striking incident restored me to my senses; and I returned home with the most cheerful alacrity, as to the certain assylum of happiness and tranquillity.

In a little time after I had thus recovered from the delirium of flattery and folly, our society received a considerable acquisition in our acquaintance with Dorilas. This gentleman, who had lately come to the country in pursuit of health and rural amusements, was first noticed by my father for his regular attendance at church; and by the politeness of his manners, and solidity of his conversation, soon recommended himself to his particular regard. He appeared to be one of those favourites of Nature, whom she has endowed with her best gifts, a good understanding, and a benevolent heart. His mind seemed enlightened by science, enlarged by a knowledge of the world, and we were told, had been softened by the correcting hand of misfortune. He came frequently to the parsonage-house, to which he had at all times a general invitation, and where he was ever welcomed by the unaffected kindness of plain, but genuine hospitality. As Dorilas seemed to pique himself on his retirement from the more dissipated scenes of life, he always appeared pleased with our rural simplicity; but no sooner did Dorilas

get intimately acquainted with the families of higher rank, and found himself established in a circle of greater *style*, than he omitted his visits at the parsonage-house, and even mentioned its inhabitants with that sort of contemptuous ridicule, which, though it may be a very fashionable *maniere de parler*, gives a deeper wound to the feelings than the envenomed sting of calumny can inflict. We were all hurt at thus being disappointed in a character of which we had formed so high an idea; and when on a visit to my friend at the county-town, I accidentally met with Dorilas, I found it impossible to conceal the resentment with which his conduct had inspired me. But when I saw his surprise at the apparent coldness of my manner, I began to reflect, that should we be mistaken or misinformed, I might, by my seeming caprice, have done an injury to feelings, perhaps no less delicately susceptible of it than my own. I therefore resolved to acquaint him with what we had heard, and frankly to tell him our opinion of his behaviour; but in the only opportunity that ever after offered, I was so embarrassed by the stately distance of his manner, and the difficulty of introducing the subject with becoming delicacy and spirit, that I found it impossible to fulfil my intention. The little conversation that passed only served him with a pretence to put an entire end to our acquaintance; and in six months after, Dorilas set out on a gay party to the German Spa, without deigning to inquire even for my father.

Such is the incense offered at the shrine of Fashion! not only by the vain and giddy, but even by the sentimental and judicious! and such the attentions people who shine not in that brilliant sphere may expect to meet with in the world! But happy! thrice happy they! according to the wise maxims of my venerable parent, who are endowed with that

true greatness of mind, which can look down with equal indifference on the soothing praise of flattery, or the scornful sneer of pride; who independent of the favour of the fickle, and the regards of the inconstant, derive a happiness from the humble consciousness of superior virtue, that infinitely transcends all which the world can bestow.

Afraid of having already too long trespassed on your patience, I now hasten to conclude, with assuring you how much I am

Your admiring reader,

ALMERIA.

N° 47. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24, 1785.

Herodotus tells us, that Amasis king of Egypt established a law, commanding, that every Egyptian should annually declare, before the governor of the province, by what means he maintained himself; which if he ommitted to do, or if, on such examination, he gave not a satisfactory account of his way of living, he should be punished with death.

Happening to meet with this passage one night lately, it suggested some ideas as to the wisdom of such an institution, and I amused myself for half an hour before I went to bed with reflecting on the effects it might have, if introduced into this island. These thoughts recurred in my sleep, and produced a dream, of which I shall endeavour to give some account, after premising that, when I awaked in the morning, it was some time before I could with certainty determine whether my imagination had trans-

ported me to Egypt, or if the objects it had presented to my view in my sleep were the consequence of the promulgation of a similar law in our country.

Upon the appointed day, I fancied that I accompanied the whole inhabitants of the province to the palace of the governor. On our arrival we were shewn into a hall of vast extent, at one end of which, on something like a throne, sat the governor, surrounded by clerks, whose business it was to take down the account which every person in his turn should give. Silence being proclaimed, we were directed to approach the throne one by one, in a certain order, to give an account of our way of *living*, and to say by what means each of us maintained himself. This summons appeared the more awful, that the law of Amasis, like many other good institutions, had been allowed to go into disuse, and, after being neglected for ages, was now revived on account of some recent enormities, which called forth the attention of government. I fancied too, that the law was so far altered, that, instead of death in all cases, the governor was authorised to inflict such punishment upon delinquents as their offences should seem to merit.

The first whose lot it was to answer the awful question, was a handsome young man clothed in a garment of bright scarlet embroidered with gold. He approached the throne with an assured countenance, and, with a look of self-approbation, informed the governor, that he lived by the most honourable of all professions; that his sole business was to kill and destroy his own species, to butcher men who had never injured him, whom perhaps he had never seen before, or for whom he entertained the highest esteem and regard. For doing this, said he, my country gives me a daily allowance, on which I live with ease and comfort.

At this account I observed a momentary blush to cross the face of the governor. He dismissed the young man with a look in which I could discern marks of dissatisfaction, not with the individual before his eyes, but with those absurd and unjust measures of government which were supposed to make such institutions necessary.

The officer was succeeded by a young man still more gaily dressed. As he approached the throne, I could perceive in his countenance marks of anxiety and apprehension, which he seemed desirous to conceal by an appearance of ease and indifference. When the usual questions were put to him, he hesitated for some time; but at length was obliged to declare that he was the son of an honest and industrious tradesman; that, despising the occupation of his father, he left his house, and removed to Memphis, where, by the splendour of his appearance, he contrived to get into the society of persons of high distinction; and that he supported the expence of this mode of life, by playing with those persons for large sums of money at games, in which, by much labour and constant attention, he had attained a superior degree of excellence. The governor having heard him to an end, sentenced the unfortunate youth to be sent back to the house of his father, to assist him in his labour. The father who was present in the hall, at the same time received orders to keep his son in close confinement, till he had acquired a habit of application, and a sufficient degree of skill in the business to which he was now to apply himself.

He was followed by a person not unlike him in manner and appearance, though somewhat more advanced in years. The account this person gave of himself was nearly in these words: "I was born to an independent fortune, to which I succeeded at the age of eighteen by the death of my father. From

that moment, my sole object was the enjoyment of my fortune, of which I thought I should never be able to see an end. I joined in every party of pleasure, and indulged in every species of expensive dissipation. At the end of seven years, I found my fortune gone, and the only comfort that remained for me was, that I had spent it in a manner suitable to my rank, and in the society of the first and noblest persons in Egypt. Happily for me, those great persons conceived that it would be unbecoming to expose one who had passed so many hours in their company, to poverty and want; at the same time they justly considered, that it might degrade a person who could boast of once having been their equal and companion, to subsist on the bounty of private individuals. They therefore humbly besought our mighty sovereign, to bestow upon me an office at once honourable and lucrative. To this request he was pleased to lend a favourable ear. The emoluments of my office are considerable; but I am obliged to give a portion of them to a creature who performs the duties of it, and upon the remainder I can still afford to live in luxury not much inferior to that of my former opulence."—Upon hearing this account, the governor inquired into the character of the deputy, and finding he was a worthy and respectable citizen, who had long done the business of a laborious and an important office for the small pittance allowed him by the gentleman before him, he pronounced a sentence which to me appeared highly equitable. He ordered, that the deputy should in future draw the whole emoluments, paying only to the principal the same allowance which formerly the deputy had received.

The next person who approached the throne, addressed the governor with an unembarrassed and a steady countenance in the following words: "By

some fortunate circumstances," said he, "I was early in life introduced into the society of many persons of the first distinction. At their tables I acquired a taste for good living, which I came to consider as the first of all enjoyments; but possessing no fortune, this passion might have proved a curse instead of a blessing, had I not happily discovered a method of gratifying it, at once easy and agreeable. By my intercourse with the great, I soon discovered that it was in my power to give, in return for the dainties of their table, something which to them was more precious, while it cost me nothing. At the board of Sethos, I harrangue in praise of learning and learned men, well knowing that, amidst all his opulence and splendour, the chief ambition of Sethos is to be considered as a man of letters. At the elegant repasts of Osoroth, I join him in declaiming against the luxury of modern times; while each of his company, with equal solicitude, looks around for some new delicacy to provoke a satiated appetite. At the house of the rich Susennes, whose vanity lies in the splendour of his entertainments, and in the excellence of his table, I openly praise every dish that is served up, and tell Susennes, that his wine of Persia is the finest in the world, and that his gardens produce fruits of unrivalled excellence. In this vocation or calling of mine, as it may be termed, there is one circumstance which, it must be confessed, is sometimes a little unpleasant. When at the table of one great friend I happen to deliver sentiments and opinions diametrically opposite to those I had supported the day before at another place, a pert visitor may be so rude as to remark this sudden change, or by a broad grin to shew that it has not passed unobserved. But nevertheless;" continued he, "I contrive to live happily, and to enjoy all the advantages of a great fortune, without the trouble and embar-

rassment of it."—"Live then," said the governor, with a look of ineffable contempt, "if you can submit to live on such terms."

Upon the removal of this gentleman, there appeared a tall, thin, meagre figure, which stalked up with wonderful dignity to the presence of the governor, and thus addressed him: "I am the representative of the noblest and most ancient family in Egypt. My forefathers were the companions of the victories of Sesostris and Semiramis. It is true, that, owing to the princely generosity of my great ancestors, I am at present obliged to honour some wealthy inhabitants of this province, so far as to receive from them the means of subsistence. Emboldened, perhaps, by this circumstance, one of those persons lately presumed to ask my daughter in marriage, telling me that their hearts had long been united by every tie of the most tender affection. But I drove the vile plebeian from my presence; and had I not been prevented, would have sacrificed him to my just indignation."

At the close of this narrative, the governor hesitated for a moment, and then ordered the guards to conduct this noble personage to the hospital set apart for the reception of lunatics.

A gentleman, whose train and whose appearance bespoke his consequence, now approached the throne, with a look and manner, polished at the same time and assured. "I presume," said he to the governor, "you are not unacquainted with the name of Zoroes. In that council which the wisdom of our sovereign has established for the government of his Ethiopian dominions, I hold a distinguished place; a situation which I owe to my own talents, having neither the influence of hereditary wealth, nor the pride of illustrious ancestry, to support me. But in the college of the priests at Memphis, I was early

taught qualities by which to compensate the want of those advantages; penetration to discover the weaknesses, and pliancy to conciliate the affections, of men. In that seminary likewise I acquired a power of eloquence to lead the passions, a subtlety of argument to confound the judgment. Endowed with such accomplishments, I obtained a seat in that council, which by the superiority of my talents I have since been enabled to guide. Amidst the divisions with which that council has been agitated, amidst the factions with which our province has been torn, the art of Zoroes has drawn from those divisions and those factions his power and his emoluments: he has wielded to his purposes the furious zeal of the multitude, and the jarring interests of their leaders; and has risen, by his command over the fluctuating opinions of mankind, to rank, to office, and to wealth."—The governor looked sternly at him, and his face reddened with indignation; "I am not indeed," said he, "a stranger to the name of Zoroes; I have heard of such a man, who lives on the mischiefs of faction, who foments divisions that he may increase his own consequence, and creates parties that he may guide them in the blindness of their course; who sows public contention that he may reap private advantage, and thrives amidst the storms that wreck the peace of his country."—He gave the signal to the guards, who hurried Zoroes to his fate. His punishment was cruel, but somewhat analogous to his character and his crimes. He was exposed in an island of the Nile to the crocodiles that inhabit it.

After witnessing this disagreeable exercise of justice, it was with pleasure I beheld a beautiful female, dressed with equal elegance and splendour, tripping towards the throne, and seemingly pleased with the admiration of the surrounding multitude.

In a sweet accent, though with a manner rather infantine, she informed the governor, that some months ago she had married a man of fourscore, who had nothing to recommend him but his immense wealth, of which she previously stipulated, that she should have the absolute disposal. "You see," said she, "the use I make of it. These jewels are esteemed the finest in the province; and I hope soon to possess a set still more precious." The governor, without hearing more of her prattle, pronounced a sentence which I confess I thought somewhat severe. He ordered her to be stript of all her costly ornaments, and to be sent home in a plain garment to the house of her husband, with instructions, that, during the remainder of his days, she should be constrained to live constantly with him, and permitted to see no other company whatever.

While I was commiserating the hard fate of the fair unfortunate, the crier pronounced my own name, in a deep and hollow tone of voice. This alarmed me so much, that I awaked in no small consternation, and was very well pleased to find myself quietly in my own bed in the good town of Edinburgh. Of all men living, a Lounger must ever be the most puzzled to give an account of his life, conversation, and mode of living; and therefore, however wise the law of Amasis may be, I fairly own that I was happy to find I was not subject to it.

N° 48. SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1785.

Discipulus est prioris posterior dies. SEN.

The Lounger having now "rounded one revolving year," may consider himself as an acquaintance of some standing with his readers, and, at this period of gratulations, may venture to pay them the compliments of the season with the freedom of intimacy and the cordiality of friendship. In the life of a periodical Essayist, a twelvemonth is a considerable age. That part of the world in which his subject lies, he has then had an opportunity of viewing in all its different situations; he has seen it in the hurry of business, in the heyday of amusement, in the quiet of the country; and he now attends it in its course of Christmas festivity and holiday merriment.

Yet I know not how it is, that amidst the gratulations and festivity of this returning season, I am sometimes disposed to hear the one, and partake the other, with a certain seriousness of mind not well suited to the vacancy of the time; to look on the jollity around me with an eye of thought, and to impress, in my imagination, a tone of melancholy on the voices that wish me many happy years.

As men advance in life, the great divisions of time may indeed furnish matter for serious reflection, as he who counts the money he has spent, naturally thinks of how much a smaller sum he has left behind. Yet, for my own part, it is less from anxiety about what remains of time, than from the remembrance of that which is gone, that I am led into this "mood of pensiveness." In my hours of thoughtful indo-

lence, I am not apt to conjure up phantoms of the future; 'tis with a milder sort of melancholy that I sometimes indulge in recalling the shades of the past. To this perhaps the Lounger's manner and habits of life naturally incline him. To him leisure gives frequent occasions to review his time, and to compare his thoughts. By the Lounger a few ideas, natural and congenial to his mind are traced through all their connections; while the man of professional industry and active pursuit has many that press upon him in succession, and are quickly dismissed. He who lives in a crowd gains an extensive acquaintance but little intimacy; the man who possesses but a few friends, enjoys them much, and thinks of them often.

Time mellows ideas as it mellows wine.—Things in themselves indifferent acquire a certain tenderness in recollection; and the scenes of our youth, though remarkable neither for elegance or feeling, rise up to our memory dignified at the same time and endeared. As countrymen in a distant land acknowledge one another as friends, so objects, to which when present we gave but little attention, are nourished in distant remembrance with a cordial regard. If in their own nature of a tender kind, the ties which they had on the heart are drawn still closer, and we recal them with an enthusiasm of feeling which the same objects of the immediate time are unable to excite. The ghosts of our departed affections are seen through that softening medium, which, though it dims their brightness, does not impair their attraction; like the shade of *Dido* appearing to *Æneas*,

" Agnovitque per umbram
" Obscuram, qualem primo qui surgere mense
" Aut videt, aut vidisse putat per nubila lunam;
" Demisit lacrymas dulcique affatus amore est.'

The hum of a little tune, to which in our infancy we have often listened; the course of a brook which in our childhood we have frequently traced; the ruins of an ancient building which we remember almost entire; these remembrances sweep over the mind with an enchanting power of tenderness and melancholy, at whose bidding the pleasures, the business, the ambition of the present moment fade and disappear.

Our finer feelings are generally not more grateful to the fancy than moral to the mind. Of this tender power which remembrance has over us, several uses might be made; this divinity of memory, did we worship it aright, might lend its aid to our happiness as well as to our virtue.

An amiable and ingenious philosopher has remarked, that in castle-building no man is a villain.* In like manner it may perhaps be pronounced that every man is virtuous in recollection; he rests with peculiar satisfaction on the remembrance of such actions as are most congenial to the better parts of his nature, on such pleasures as were innocent, on such designs as were laudable. It were well if, amidst the ardor of pursuit, or the hopes of gratification, we sometimes considered that the present will be future, as well as that the future will be present, that we anticipated reflection as well as enjoyment. Not only in those greater and more important concerns, which are what Shakespeare calls 'Stuff o'the conscience,' but in the lesser and more trivial offices of life, we should be more apt to conduct ourselves aright, did we think that we were one day to read the drama in which we now perform, and that of ourselves, and the other personages of the scene, we were to judge with a critical severity.

* Dr. Reid, in his 'Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man.'

This indulgence of memory, this review of time, would blunt the angry and discordant passions that often prey on our own quiet as well as on the peace of others. Scarce any man is so hard of heart as to feel himself an enemy over the grave of his foe; and the remembrance of contests, however just, with those who are now no more, comes across an ingenuous mind with a sort of self-accusation. The progress of time, though it may not have swept our adversaries from the earth, will probably have placed both them and us in circumstances such as to allay, if not extinguish our resentment. Prosperity to us, or misfortunes to them, may have soothed our anger into quiet, or softened it to pity. The lessons of Time may have taught us, what Wisdom or Prudence once preached to us in vain, that the object of our contention was not worth the struggle of the contest, that we mistook the value of the prize, or did injustice to the motives of our competitors; or perhaps we have altered those sentiments in which we were formerly so warm, and forsaken those tenets we were once so positive to maintain. The hand of Time, imperceptible in its touch, steals the colour from our opinions; and like those who look on faded pictures, we wonder at having formerly been struck with their force.

Though it is wisely ordered by Providence, that we should not pause in the pursuits of life to think of its shortness, or undervalue every attainment from the uncertainty of its duration when attained; yet such a consideration may fairly enough mitigate a blameable eagerness in the chace, or a blameable depression from its disappointment. I was very well pleased with the philosophy of an old soldier, whom I once met with in the environs of London, leaning on a crutch, and rather accepting than soliciting the aid of the charitable. He told

me, not without some importunity on my part, the hardships and the dangers he had encountered; the number of his campaigns, the obstinacy of his engagements, the length of his sieges; 'yet I failed in getting Chelsea,' said he, 'because I was rendered incapable of the service in consequence of a rheumatism contracted in a winter encampment; and, more than all that, because my wife, somehow or other, had disobliged my commanding officer. But I forget and forgive, as the saying is; and, thanks to such as your Honour, I can make shift to live. It is true, I have seen others get halberts, ay, and commissions too, that were not better men than myself;—but that don't signify. *It will be all the same an hundred years hence.*' Without all the happy Stoicism of the soldier, we may often sooth the pangs of envy, and the pinings of discontent, by the consideration of that period, when they shall cease to disquiet, when time shall have unplumed the pageantry of grandeur, narrowed the domains of wealth, and withered the arm of power.

Nor will this philosophy of time convey a less important lesson to the successful than to the unfortunate. It will moderate the luxurious indulgence of the rich, and restrain the wanton or useless exertions of the powerful. Every one who can look back on a moderately long life, will remember a succession of envied possessors of wealth and influence, whose luxury a thousand flatterers were wishing to share, whose favour a crowd of dependents were striving to obtain. Let those who now occupy their place attend to the effects of that wealth enjoyed, of those favours bestowed. Let them cast up the sum of pleasure which was produced by the one, of gratitude or self-satisfaction procured by the other. If there are any whom elevation has made giddy, or power rendered insolent, let them think how long that elevation can endure, how far that power can

extend; let them consider in how short a space the influence of their predecessors have ceased to be felt, how soon their appointments have made room for the appointments of others; how few of their dependents and favourites survive, and of those few how very small a part acknowledge their benefactor. If some of the actions of such eminent persons there are which the world still remembers with approbation and individuals own with gratitude; they are probably such as, in this review of the past, it will be useful for their successors to observe and to imitate. Those have obtained a victory over time, which is the noblest excitement and animation to virtue; that honest fame of which the consciousness gives its highest enjoyment to the present, which the future can neither reproach nor overcome.

Z

N° 49. SATURDAY, JANUARY 7, 1786.

No subject tends to throw more light on the history of mankind, or their progress in the different situations of society, than their public amusements, or the state of those arts which contribute to their entertainment.

Comedy, which consists in the dramatic representation of human characters in a ridiculous point of view, makes a distinguished figure among the amusements of mankind. The following reflections are thrown together on the history of Comedy, as they may afford some useful observations on the progress of manners and of arts, as well as introduce a continuation

of the remarks I formerly made on the moral effects of the drama.

The first and original method in which Ridicule exercised itself in dramatic representation appears to have consisted, not so much in giving a view of the character of the person to be exhibited on the stage, as in representing a particular individual in a ludicrous situation. To point out the feelings of the character, —to represent the turn of mind—to display the humour or internal features of the man, was not so much the object, as to bring the person himself on the stage, and to raise ridicule in the audience, by making him commit some action absurd, droll, out of place, or inconsistent. A man respected for dignity, and in a reputable situation, is brought upon the stage, not to exhibit his dignity as false and affected, not to represent the real or internal feelings of his mind, or to point out those features by which his assumed character may be exposed, but merely with a view to make him commit some absurd or mean action, inconsistent with the gravity and respectable tenor of his usual conduct.

Such is the exhibition of Aristophanes's Socrates. No history of human character is given, no display of the character of Socrates in particular; nor is any principle or feature of his mind represented. The author confines himself singly to making Socrates do things upon the stage unworthy of himself, or of his character; and the audience is entertained with the contrast, is amused with this performance of mean or little actions by a man of a grave and serious deportment. The ridicule in this case does not give a view of the character, but is confined to the joke arising from the action performed, compared with that of the man who performs it. Socrates is not made ridiculous by doing what is like, but what is unlike himself.

This observation needs not be confined to the Clouds of Aristophanes, but may be farther extended, and appears indeed to comprehend the general characteristic of all early Comedies, written or represented before people have arrived at a great degree of refinement.

It is not difficult to assign the reason for this being the general characteristic of early Comedies.

Men in an early age are not reasoners.——The bulk of the people at least are not accustomed to make general conclusions and reflections on human character. They would not therefore be amused by general exhibitions of character, by Comedies which represented actions as displaying only the internal features and original causes of human conduct. Such an exhibition would be adapted to their taste, or the state of their minds. The rude representation of a particular person, who does actions absurd in themselves, or absurd in him to perform, is the only thing which can produce their laughter, or afford them a comic entertainment.

Men in an early age, who have not made much progress in refinement, will receive a peculiar pleasure in seeing the character of an individual, of a person known to themselves, exhibited on the stage; whereas, when men advance in refinement, they will come to feel uneasy at this representation of real characters; their delicacy will be shocked at the exhibition of so coarse an entertainment, and something of a purer kind will be substituted in its room.—Hence what was called the *middle Comedy* was substituted among the Greeks in place of the *old*. The *middle Comedy* was less coarse than the *old*, because the *old* represented real persons on the stage, under their real names; in the *middle*, feigned names were given to the real persons; but this improvement soon gave way to a much higher one, the *new Comedy*,

where both real names and real living persons were banished from the stage.

Should it be said that at the time Aristophanes wrote, the Greeks were in a state of great advancement, were a learned and intelligent people; and that therefore Aristophanes should not be given as an example of a comic author in an early and unrefined period; it may be observed, that though the Greeks were certainly in the time of Aristophanes a very wise people, and possessed of the most eloquent and philosophical writers, yet at that time the Athenians were remarkably deficient in delicacy and politeness. Perhaps in so violent and turbulent a democracy as that of Athens, the people, amidst the acrimony of debate and rude contests of ambition, remain long in a state of barbarism as to manners. This has been observed, and endeavoured to be accounted for by several ingenious authors; one * of whom indeed cites, as an instance of it, this very circumstance of the amusement which the Athenians found in the lowest species of Comedy. 'They were so little judges,' says he, 'of propriety in wit and humour, as to relish the low ribaldry of an Aristophanes, at a period when they were entertained with the sublime eloquence of a Demosthenes, with the pathetic compositions of an Euripides or a Sophocles.'

As the body of the people, however, advance in refinement or delicacy, this ancient species of Comedy, as it did among the Greeks, will come to give disgust instead of entertainment.

Comic authors will then betake themselves to a different species of writing; and the next step seems to be, instead of the exhibition of a particular person, to give the history of some general passion, affection, or principle of the human mind. The bulk of men who frequent public places of amusement,

* Miller on the Origin of the Distinction of Ranks.

have then attained such a degree of improvement, by experience and reflection, as to relish a general representation of the history of the human heart in trying and interesting scenes; and hence views of characters in those situations will be relished and understood.

When this species of writing, however, first begins, the representations of character that are given will be confined to the more general views of the human mind, acting under the influence of some one leading principle. The nice features of that principle, the small deviations to which it is subject, its various combinations with other principles, or its discriminations arising from peculiar circumstances of situation or of habit, will not be attended to or held out to view. Before men go into particulars, they must be well acquainted with what is general; before they consider the nice, they must be intimate with the gross features.

Hence our early but improved writers, not only of Comedy, but of every species of writing which represents characters, give only general representations. The ambitious, the envious, the avaricious man, is represented under the dominion of his guiding principle, but the nicer features of the principle are not delinated. Theophrastus wrote at a period of less delicacy, and when minute proprieties were less attended to, than La Bruyere; the characters therefore of the first are more general and less nice than of the latter.

Of all writers, indeed, the French seem to have paid most attention to the small and minute views of character, and to the different properties of life and manners. Living in an age of refinement and politeness, under a monarchical government, where the *agreeable* are the qualities which conduce to advancement, the elegant and recommendatory virtues are

chiefly cultivated. A new species of morals, unknown and unattended to among the ancients, the term for which, *petites morales*, cannot even be translated into our language, has been introduced, and has become a principal object both in conduct and philosophy. Hence the nice perception which French authors have of all the delicate discriminations of character; hence their observance of all the deviations from what is becoming; and hence their talent of describing and representing all the proprieties and improprieties of human conduct. The English writers in general may be possessed of more metaphysical profoundness: but they have not the same lively talent at describing manners, nor the same delicate observation of the different tints and colourings in which they appear.

At the same time it may be observed, that even in Britain some authors have appeared, who have excelled in giving minute pictures of manners, and of the nice features of character. Of these Addison and Sterne may be mentioned as holding a distinguished place.

This is the last improvement which arises in the representation of human characters; when not only their general features, under certain great classes, are exhibited, but when writers descend to, and are able at the same time to point out the smaller discriminations into which those general classes subdivide themselves, and appear in different men. When characters are represented in this manner, the writing of Comedy is at its perfection; and as the moderns seem to have possessed more of this talent than the ancients, so the comedies of the former seem to excel those of the latter. The ancient comedies contain only the general characters of men and manners, young rakes, old men, parasites, lovers, slaves: but every old man is the same, every young rake is like

every other rake; their pursuits are without distinctions; and their slaves have no other discrimination, than that the one half of them are old, faithful, trusty servants, and the other half lying, plotting, witty rascals.

It may, however, be observed, that this species of writing, in which the moderns have so greatly excelled, is much exposed to corruption and abuse. While the ancient manner of drawing characters is defective, by being too general, there is danger lest this other species become faulty, by being too particular. Men attentive to represent the minute lines, may neglect the more important, and instead of representing a character which belongs to human kind, they may come to represent only those particular characters which distinguish individuals. Instead of comedies of nature, they may give comedies of manners, fleeting, volatile, uncertain, and as impossible to be reduced to rule as the flimsy modes of fashion. Thus, according to the phrase, that *extremes always agree*, it may happen that the last improvement in Comedy may degenerate into that very abuse for which the rudest and most ancient may be censured. Particular persons may come to be represented on the stage instead of general characters. Something of this kind was some time ago introduced on the English stage; though it may be observed, that this mode of writing owed its success more to the mimic qualities of its author, than to its being approved of by the taste of the audience.

But this is not the only thing to be feared from men's giving minute attention to the smaller parts of character; there is also a danger of its having an improper effect on their own character and conduct. When their attention is chiefly bestowed on the little parts of conduct, they may come to neglect or overlook the greater. Manner may be put in the place

of substance; and what is frivolous may be preferred to what is manly. As this species of corruption may be considered as the greatest in literary composition, so it is most certainly the greatest in morals. When what is trifling is only regarded, there never can be any splendid exertions of genius, there never can be any real greatness of character. All sublime and manly efforts will be at an end; all noble exertions in the field, and all genuine eloquence in the senate, will be extinguished. Our battles will be bloodless, and in our speeches prettiness will be preferred to simplicity and force. 'Tis the leading object in a late series of Letters on Education, to represent the manner of doing a thing as preferable to the thing itself; to point out the frivolous and exterior accomplishments, the graces, as a surer road to advancement, than truth, integrity, or a spirit of independence, than the possession of the greatest knowledge, or the exertion of the most illustrious talents.

A

N° 50. SATURDAY, JANUARY 14, 1786.

'TRAGEDY (according to the ancient definition quoted in a former paper) purges the passions by exciting them.' Comedy wishes to purge vices and follies by Ridicule. In a corrupt age, reason is so weak as to be obliged to call in such allies to her assistance: let her beware that they do not, like the Saxon auxiliaries of our ancestors, usurp the government which they were called to defend.

In the earliest periods of life, ridicule is naturally employed against reason and propriety.—The child who obeys its mother, who is afraid of its governess, who will not be concerned in little plots to deceive both, is laughed at by its bolder and less scrupulous companions. At every age, reason and duty are grave and serious things, in which ridicule finds a contrast that renders her attack more easy, and her sallies more poignant.

The refinement of polished times, as was observed in the foregoing Number, does not allow them to find amusement in that gross ridicule which provokes the laughter of a ruder people. But from this very source their subjects of Comedy are often of a dangerous kind. They trench upon sacred ground; I mean not as to religion, but in morals; they paint those nicer shades of ridicule which are of an equivocal sort between virtue and vice, and often give the spectator leave to laugh, according to his own humour, either at the first or the latter.

In the *Ecole des Femmes* (and I shall hardly be reckoned unfair when I make the reference to *Moliere*) most of the maxims which *Arnolphe* makes *Agnes* read, are really good moral precepts, which a prudent wife would do well to follow, for her own sake as well as her husband's. There is just as much prudery and suspicion thrown into them, as to allow those who would wish to be less guarded than a good wife ought to be, to hold them in derision.

The *George Dandin* of the same author has been already criticised in this moral view by a very able writer. But he has not attended, say its defenders, to the proper moral of the piece; which is to correct a very common sort of weakness as well as of injustice, in old men of low birth and great wealth, who purchase alliance with decayed nobility, and are vain enough to imagine, that a wife, bought from her

necessities, or from the necessities of her family, is to love and respect the husband who has purchased her. But besides that this corrective is applied to the party who may be the weakest, but is certainly the least wicked of the two, such examples conveyed through the medium of Comedy, are always more readily applied to those whom they may mislead, than to those whom they may reform. The images which Comedy presents, and the ridicule it excites, being almost always exaggerated, their resemblance to real life is only acknowledged by those whose weaknesses they flatter, whose passions they excuse. They who use the example of the scene for an apology, can easily twist it into that form; they who wish to escape its correction, easily discover the difference between the scenic situation and theirs. The *George Dandin*, and the *Cocu Imaginaire* of real life, neither meet with *Lubins* nor *Pictures* to abuse them; but the girl who thinks herself entitled to be the *Angelique* of the piece, will find no difficulty in discovering her good man to be a *Dandin;* she who wishes her husband to be blind, will never forget the prudent advice of *Sganarelle.*

'*Quand vous verriez tout, ne croyez jamais rien.*'

Harpagon is held up to detestation by Moliere, for the correction of the old, the avaricious, the usurer, whom the world procribes, whom his children must hate for his criminal parsimony. Alas! misers and usurers neither read nor see comedies; but the young and the thoughtless are taught to call prudence and œconomy covetousness and avarice, to be dissipated and extravagant out of pure virtue.

In the *Cheats of Scapin*, the audience is always on the side of the rogue against the poor deluded and abused old man. It is so in all comic scenes of the kind, from the slaves of Terence down to the valets

of Moliere and Regnard. Ask any wise and discreet mother of a family, if she would allow her children to associate with the party-coloured gentlemen below stairs; she will tell you that it is of all things what she is at pains to avoid; because in their society her children would learn low manners, habits of cunning, of trick, and of falsehood. Yet you bring them into such company in the Comedies of the virtuous Moliere, where, if the valets are more clever and witty than those of ordinary life, they are only the more expert and agreeable rogues. We do not bring them into such society, you say; we only exhibit it to their view. But you shew them people of equal rank with themselves mixed with that society, profiting by those rogueries, applauding the invention which gives them birth. If the drama is to have any effect at all, its operation in this case must be unfavourable to truth and to virtue.

In Tragedy, this effect does not require exhibition to give it force; on the contrary, it is perhaps in the reading that it fastens most strongly on young and susceptible minds. The softer feelings, to which it addresses itself, are more accessible in solitude and silence than in society. It is otherwise with Comedy, ridicule operating more powerfully in company and in a crowd. There is besides no hero of a player equal to the hero of a tragedy: but the handsome figure, the shewy garb, the assured countenance, the unembarrassed address, the easy negligence, of many a comedian, is fully equal to the character he is to represent. The fine gentleman of real life is a sort of comic actor.' When we consider how much imitation, how much art, how much affectation, go to make up his part, we shall not wonder, if even those who have often seen such exhibitions, should sometimes mistake the player who personates for the character personated; but the young and the

unexperienced naturally transfer the brilliancy of the character to his mimic representative. This gives a double force to the dialogue of the piece, and affords, in the person of a pretty fellow of a player, a very winning apology for whatever is exceptionable in the character he performs.

In the observations I formerly made on the moral effects of Tragedy, I took notice of the consequences resulting from the almost uniform introduction of love, as the ruling motive of tragic action. To this objection Comedy is equally liable; but there is an additional circumstance in which it is still more objectionable than the other department of the drama. As love is the principal action, marriage is the constant end of Comedy. But the marriage of Comedy is generally of that sort which holds forth the worst example to the young; not an union the result of tried attachment, of sober preference, sanctified by virtue and by prudence. These are the matches which comedy ridicules. Her marriages are the frolics of the moment, made on the acquaintance of a day, or of some casual encounter. In many comedies, amidst the difficulties of accomplishing the marriage on which the intrigue of the piece turns, and in the course of which its incidents are displayed, the restraints of parents and guardians are introduced only to be despised and out-witted; age, wisdom, experience, every thing, which a well-educated young person should respect and venerate, is made a jest of; pertness, impudence, falsehood, and dishonesty, triumph and laugh; the audience triumphs and laughs along with them: and it is not till within a few sentences of the conclusion, that the voice of morality is uttered, not heard. The interest of the play is then over, the company is arraigning its departure; and if any one listens, 'tis but to observe how dull and common-place these reflections are. Virtue is thus

doubly degraded, both when she speaks and when she is silent.

The purity of the British Comedy in modern times, has been often contrasted with the drama of our forefathers, in those days of licentiousness and immorality when Wycherly and Congreve wrote for the rakes and libertines of a profligate court. I forbear to cite, in contradiction to this, the ribaldry with which, for some time past, our stage has been infested, in the form of Comic Operas and Burlettas, by which the laugh and the applause of Sadler's Wells and Bartholomew Fair have been drawn from the audiences of Covent-Garden and Drury-Lane. But I must observe, that in this comparative estimate no account has been taken of a kind of licentiousness in which some of our latest comedies have indulged, still more dangerous than the indelicacy of the last century: those sometimes violated decency, but these attack principle; those might put modesty to the blush, or contaminate the purity of innocence; but these shake the very foundation of morality, and would harden the mind against the sense of virtue.

It is somewhat remarkable, that the French stage, formerly so proud of its *bienseance*, should have, nearly at the same period with that of England, assumed the like pernicious licentiousness. Figaro, though a less witty, is as immoral a play as the School for Scandal.

Dramas of this pernicious sort arose upon the fashionable ridicule against what was called *Sentimental Comedy*, which it had become customary to decry, as subverting the very intention of that department of the stage, and usurping a name, from which the gravity of its precepts, and the seriousness of its incidents, should have excluded it. This judgment, however, seems to be founded neither on the

critical definition of Comedy, nor on the practice of its writers in those periods when it had attained its highest reputation. Menander and Terence wrote Comedies of Sentiment; nor does it seem easy to represent even follies naturally, without sometimes bringing before us the serious evils which they may produce, and the reflections which arise on their consequences.—Morality may no doubt be trite, and sentiment dull in the hands of authors of little genius; but profligacy and libertinism will as often be silly as wicked, though, in the impudence with which they unfold themselves, there is frequently an air of smartness which passes for wit, and of assurance which looks like vivacity. The counterfeits, however, are not always detected at that time of life which is less afraid of being thought dissipated than dull, and by that rank which holds regularity and sobriety among the plebeian virtues. The people, indeed, are always true to virtue, and open to the impressions of virtuous sentiment. With the people, the comedies in which these are developed still remain favourites; and Corruption must have stretched its empire far indeed, when the applauses shall cease with which they are received.

N° 51. SATURDAY, JANUARY 21, 1786.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR,

I WAS much pleased with one of your late papers published on the last day of last year, in which you suggested several uses that might be made of a recollection of past events, and of a proper consideration of the power of Time.

The neglect of the improvement of Time is an evil of which every moralist has complained, on which therefore it were presumption in me to attempt to enlarge. But without repeating what has been so often and so well said on its waste or its abuse, permit me to take notice of that forgetfulness of its progress, which affects the conduct and deportment of so many in the different relations of life. In matters of serious concern, we cannot violate the rights of Time without rendering ourselves unhappy; in objects of smaller importance, we cannot withdraw from its jurisdiction without making ourselves ridiculous. Its progress, however, is unfortunately very apt to be unnoticed by ourselves, to whom its daily motion is gradual and imperceptible; but by others it will hardly fail to be marked, and they will expect a behaviour suitable to the character it should stamp upon us.

How often do the old forget the period at which they are arrived, and keep up a behaviour suitable, or perhaps only excusable in that which they have long ago passed? We see every day sexagenary beaux, and grey-haired rakes, who mix with the gay

and the dissipated of the present time, and pride themselves on the want of that thought and seriousness which years alone, if not wisdom, should have taught them. This is the pitiful ambition of the weak and the profligate, who unable to attain the respect due to virtue, or the credit of usefulness, wish to shew the vigour of their minds, and the soundness of their constitutions, at a late period of life, by supporting a character of folly or licentiousness. But they should be told, that they generally fail in their object, contemptible as it is; the world only allows them credit for an attempt at follies, for an affectation of vice. 'What a fine wicked old dog your father is!' said a young fellow, in my hearing, at the door of a tavern a few nights ago. 'Why, yes,' replied his companion, with a tone of *sang froid*, 'he would if he could.'

In the other sex, I confess I feel myself more inclined to make allowance for those rebels against Time, who wish to extend the period of youth beyond its natural duration. The empire of beauty is a distinction so flattering, and its resignation makes so mortifying a change in the state of its possessor, that I am not much surprised if she who has once enjoyed it, tries every art to prolong her reign. This indulgence, however, is only due to those who have no other part to perform, no other character to support. She who is a wife or a mother, has other objects to which her attention may be turned, from which her respectability may be drawn. I cannot therefore easily pardon those whom we see at public places, the rivals of their daughters, with the airy gait, the flaunting dress, and the playful giggle of fifteen. As to those elderly ladies who continue to haunt the scenes of their early amusements, who sometimes exhibit themselves there in all the gay colours of youth and fashion, like those unnatural

fruit-trees that blossom in December, I am disposed rather to pity than to blame them. In thus attending the triumphs of beauty, they may be of the same use with the monitor who followed the Roman heroes in their triumphal processions to put them in mind, amidst the shouts of the people, and the parade of conquest, that, for all their glory, they were still but men.

But the progress of time is as often anticipated as it is forgotten, and youth usurps the privileges of age as frequently as age would retain the privileges of youth. At no period, perhaps, was this prematurity of behaviour more conspicuous than at present. We have boys discoursing politics, arguing metaphysics, and supporting infidelity, at an age little beyond that when they used to be playing at taw and leap-frog. Nor are these the most hurtful of their pretensions. In vice, as in self importance, they contrive to get beyond 'the ignorant present time;' and, at the years of boyishness, to be perfect men in licentiousness and debauchery. It is much the same with the young people of the female world. Girls, who formerly used to be found in the nursery, are now brought forward to all the prerogatives of womanhood. To figure at public places, to be gallanted at public walks, to laugh and talk loud at both, to have all the airs, and all the ease of a fine lady, are now the acquirements of misses, who in my younger days, Mr. Lounger, were working their samplers, learning white seam, or were allowed to spoil a mince-pie, by way of an exercise in pastry: and it is no uncommon thing, now a days, to see in the corner of a ball-room at midnight, leaning on the arm of her partner, and now and then answering some of his speeches with a rap of her fan, the same ungrown girl, who, not a great many years ago, would have curtsey'd to the company, kissed

Papa and Mama, and gone to bed supperless between eight and nine in the evening. In both sexes, the 'ingenuous purdor,' the becoming modesty and reserve, which were formerly the most pleasing characteristies of youth, seem now to be exploded: they have forgot to blush; and the present rule of manners is sueh, that their parents do not blush for them. I eonfess, Sir, it is not without some indignation that I frequently see fathers and mothers smiling with eomplaceney and pride on their children, for saying and doing things for which, in my time, they would have been turned out of the room.—But I am an old man, apt perhaps to complain and be peevish. That I may not incur the other eharge of the poet, the garrulity of age, I beg leave to eonelude, by assuring you that I am, Sir, your admirer and humble servant,

SENEX.

After the severity of *Senex*'s reprehension of the present times, on whieh he certainly has not looked with a favourable eye, it may be a relief to my readers, to read a letter of a lighter sort, reeeived from another eorrespondent, from whom the same paper to which *Senex* refers has drawn the following proposal.

To the AUTHOR of the LOUNGER.

SIR,

I HAD the honour of reading your paper for the *New-Year*, setting forth the natural reflections to which that returning period should give rise, and the moral uses of the reeolleetion of past events. I am one, Sir, not much given to serious reflections, yet

I acknowledge the use of remembrance, provided it does not go back an unreasonable time, and takes in only a certain set of events. I have long been an attendant and admirer of the fashionable world; and do not indeed think it worth my while to carry my philosophy down to the lower orders of the people. Of the fashionable world, I presume I need not inform you, Sir, that the New-year does not begin at the 1st of January; it used to be computed from the 18th; but this year, from some particular incidents, it is not, I believe, intended that it should begin so early. About the beginning of February, people will think of dating the commencement of the New-year, and may perhaps indulge the propensity you suppose, to recollect the events of the old. Of this, persons of fashion have the greater need, that their years suffer an interruption unknown to the natural: they exist merely, in a state of oblivion, in the country, for five or six months of summer and autumn, and may therefore be very well supposed to forget the transactions of the last year, which ended so long a while before the present began. I would propose, Sir, to help their memories by a sort of moral *Memorandum-book*, which I doubt not, as you are a philosopher and moralist, will meet with your approbation. My memorandum-book, however, will consist chiefly of things which they must remember to forget. I subjoin a few of the proposed *Memoranda*, by which you may judge of the utility of the whole.

In the first place then people of fashion will please to

—— forget *Nature* as much as possible.

Such of them as have not had the advantage of keeping in practice the rules of a polite education, during the summer months, at some of the watering-

places, will have been apt to let the rusticity of nature creep upon them. They may have learned several bad habits, which they must now by all means forget; such as, laughing at a merry, or crying at a moving tale; being themselves happy with happiness, or sad with sorrow; being pleased with the attentions of others, or pleasing others by their attentions; in short, a great many *sincerities* which might do well enough in the country, but which, like other natural productions, the winter always kills, among people of fashion in a town.

They will, secondly, remember to

—— forget their Country-acquaintance.

They may have received or bestowed many rural civilities, which it would be very improper to recollect here, and may meet with bows and curtesies from very odd or very good sort of people (for the terms are nearly synonimous), which they are to return only with a broad stare of surprise at the freedom used with them. If they have been so rusticated as not to find courage for that, the thing may be accomplished by *forgetting* their *eye-sight;* for which purpose they may resume their opera-glasses, which it is probable have lain quietly in their drawers since their departure from town.

It is a memorandum similar to the above, to put them in mind that married persons of both sexes are to

——forget their Husbands, Wives, and Children.

There is a manifest indecorum, or rather perhaps indecency, in the remembrance of such connections, of which no truly polite person will ever be guilty.

A direction somewhat akin to this is that of

——forgetting their Fortunes,

of which the remembrance, when it interferes with the demands of pleasure, or of gaiety, is one of the most vulgar and mechanical things in the world. It will at any rate, be time enough to indulge it at the end of the season, when they may possibly be put in mind of it by other people. As they are, indeed, uniformly to shun all plebeian qualities, it is indispensable for them to

—— forget their Modesty.

A proper confidence in ourselves is one of the truest marks of having lived among persons of condition. Neither knowledge, genius, valour, or virtue can bestow it; 'tis so purely the gift of fashion and fashionable society, that the want of it is an absolute disqualification for the privileges which attend them.

Under this head of mental endowments, I may suggest the propriety of

—— forgetting their Religion.

It is possible that in the country they may have given way to some vulgar prejudices, which it were highly improper to retain in town. It may not be amiss, however, to inform them, in this place, what they might otherwise have scrupled to believe, that the Church has of late become a place of fashionable resort in Edinburgh; and what is still more odd, that fine people actually attend to the sermon. The eloquence of some of our preachers, like the dagger of *Macbeth*, has "murdered sleep" there; for which reason, it will not be so convenient as formerly, to go thither after a late supper, or a long party at whist, the night before.

In point of external qualities, the ladies are to

——forget their Complexions.

In the morning they are to be much paler, and in the evening much more blooming than they were in the country. If other people remember them from the one period to the other, there is no help for it; —as things go now, it does not much signify. *Very fine* ladies may sometimes forget to dress at all; it will show ease, and a certain contempt for their company, to which people of high fashion are entitled.

On the subject of dress, I may add, by way of caution, that the ladies would do well

—— not to forget themselves.

I don't mean this in the common acceptation of the phrase, which it may be sometimes very proper and convenient to do. What I mean is simply to put them in mind, that a lady in town, in the modern dress, takes up so much more room than she does in the country, that very serious consequences might ensue from her not attending to the space which she necessarily occupies. An acquaintance of mine, who is somewhat of an antiquarian, observed to me what an opinion our great-grand-children might be led to form of the size of the ladies' heads towards the close of the 18th century, if any of the fashionable *hats* should happen to be preserved in the cabinet of the curious. But in reply, I desired him to take notice, that they would be set right as to the dimensions of the race by examining the *walking-sticks* of the men, which are just as much below the medium standard, as the hats of the other sex are beyond it. By the hats, they might conjecture us to be bred of Patagonians; by the sticks they would conclude us to be a generation of Laplanders.

But I find I am wandering from my subject. I must put myself in mind, that it is time to conclude

this hasty scrawl, by having the honour to subscribe myself, with all possible consideration and respect, SIR,

Your most obedient and
most devoted humble Servant,
MEMORY MODISH.

V

END OF VOL. XXXVI.

J. Haddon, Printer, Tabernacle Walk, Finsbury.